

The Cabinet – 13 December 2006

Report of the Director of Children's Services

The Dudley Play Strategy

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the endorsement of the Cabinet for the draft manifesto, policy, and intended outcomes for the children's play initiative in Dudley. The emerging Dudley Play Strategy will be submitted to the Big Lottery Fund in March 2007 as part of the national £155 million Children's Play Initiative.

Background

2. In November 2005, the Big Lottery Fund (BLF) wrote to all local authority Chief Executives about the funding being made available to improve play provision across England. The fund made indicative allocations of funding to each local authority area based on child population and weighted by deprivation. Dudley has been allocated £690,321 for the programme.
3. The BLF children's play initiative guidance was published on 28 March 2006 and sets out the background rationale, application framework and timetable for implementation. The aim of the programme is to create, improve and develop inclusive play provision across England. To access the funding local authorities must produce a play strategy, which sets out the local priorities, procedures and intended outcomes for the programme.
4. The Play Strategy is required to be set within existing national and local strategies including the Community Plan, the Council Plan, the Cultural Strategy, the Children and Young People's Plan and emerging Local Area Agreement (LAA). Other relevant policies including the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) also need to be considered.

5. In December 2005, the Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP) agreed to oversee the development of the Play Strategy working together with the statutory, voluntary and community partners represented on the Dudley Community Partnership (LSP) - Physical Activity Task Group (PATG) and Environmental Task Group (ETG).
6. During 2006, the CYPP has developed and endorsed a set of key policy statements, manifesto, key objectives and outcomes for the draft strategy. During June, July and August an extensive programme of engagement and consultation with over 6,000 children, young people, parents and carers has taken place. This was followed by a six-week formal consultation with all relevant partners, organisations, regional and national bodies during September and October.
7. The policy, manifesto and key outcomes have received widespread support from children, young people, parents, carers, organisations and community partners. The emerging strategy has been welcomed by Play England, the national body responsible for leading on play policy, as one of the best Children's Play Strategies seen to date.
8. The manifesto, policy statements, rationale, key objectives and outcomes are listed in appendices 1, 2 and 3 of this report.

Applications for funding

9. During August, September and October 2006 the Council launched a three-month marketing and promotion campaign to encourage a wide range of voluntary, community and statutory organisations to apply for funding from the children's play initiative lottery programme.
10. Over 100 applications for nearly £5.5 million were received by the closing date of 27 October. All eligible applications were considered by a panel of young people and community representatives on Monday 6 November and a list of their priorities can be found at appendix 4.
11. The panel included five young people from the Dudley Youth Council, Dudley Children's Fund and the Me2 disability access panel and five adults representing Dudley MBC Select Committee for Children's Services and Working Group on Listening to Children and Young People, Dudley Primary Care Trust, Dudley Community Partnership (LSP), Dudley Council for Voluntary Services (DCVS) and Dudley

Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS). The awards panel was chaired by a young person.

12. Awards Criteria

The panel used the following awards criteria and themes developed from the consultation with children and young people, the Dudley play policy statements and Big Lottery Fund assessment criteria.

Dudley children's and young people's priorities:

- *Like to be with their friends*
- *Like being active*
- *Want more adventures*
- *Love being creative*
- *Know what they want*
- *Want to be asked*
- *Want places to play*
- *Like to be respected*
- *Don't want to be bullied*
- *Want to have fun!!!*

The Dudley Play Strategy priorities:

- *Promote the importance of play*
- *Listen to what children say and act upon it*
- *Make public spaces more child friendly*
- *Help children who are disabled, disadvantaged or at risk of exclusion*
- *Help all children manage acceptable risks*

Big Lottery Fund priorities:

- *Free of charge*
- *Free to choose*
- *Free to come and go*

Overall, the Big Lottery Fund will only approve projects that:

- *create, improve and develop children and young people's free local play spaces and opportunities according to need;*
- *support innovation and new ways of providing for children's play;*

- *create a support and development infrastructure to ensure local agencies have the resources and skills to achieve the first two aims;*
- *promote the long-term strategic and sustainable provision for play as a free public service to children;*
- *ensure that local authorities work with other local stakeholders to develop children's play strategies and plans; and*
- *ensure that good, inclusive and accessible children's play services and facilities are provided locally.*

13. **Second Stage applications**

Organisations are now working up their second stage applications. The awards panel will reconvene in January 2007 to select the projects to be submitted for final endorsement by the Children and Young People's Partnership in February 2007. These will be submitted to the Big Lottery Fund in March and hopefully be approved by September 2007. The projects and programmes will run for three years. The projects will be a mixture of capital and revenue programmes delivered either by the Council or voluntary and community organisations.

14. **Council Priorities**

The Big Lottery Fund has said it wishes to prioritise those projects that are strategic in nature and target Council priorities and programmes including those in public parks, open spaces and extended schools. It is hoped that the funding will complement existing children's play priorities including providing multi use games areas, skate parks and local equipped play areas. All applications are required to have outline planning permission before they are submitted and consider issues of ongoing management and sustainability.

15. The Council will be the accountable body for the £690,321 lottery grant and be responsible for all the management, monitoring, evaluation and overseeing all projects including drawing down all funding. Ten percent of the lottery grant is available for this work and therefore no additional Council funding is required.

A full list of the applicants and those invited to move to the second stage is included at appendix 4

16. **Local Strategies**

The Dudley Play Strategy has been framed within the aims of the Community Strategy and Council Plan to help improve the quality of life for all children, young people and adults across the Borough. The Community Strategy and Council Plan specifically identifies the need for more leisure and recreational facilities that meet the needs of children and young people.

17. **Council Plan Themes**

The Play Strategy consultation and participation road show set out to listen to what local people had to say about play, respond to what they said and then help the Council to respond to their needs and be accountable for the outcomes and value for money. The children's play policy statements and outcomes have been set against the six Council Plan themes of *Caring Matters, Environment Matters, Learning Matters, Regeneration Matters, Safety Matters and Quality Service Matters*. Play and the improved provision of child focused play facilities are key objectives in the Council Plan (C1 2a). The development of a play strategy for Dudley is also a key outcome of the Cultural Strategy (2006 / 2009) and Children and Young People's Plan (2006 / 2009) by March 2007.

18. **National cross-cutting policies and strategies**

In 2002, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and Department for Education and Skills (DfES) asked Frank Dobson MP to carry out a review of children's play in England. His report, *Getting Serious About Play* was published in early 2004. The DCMS responded by setting up a cross-Whitehall group on play, which included representation from key Government departments and national organisations. In August 2006 the group published *Time for Play*, which sets out the Government's agenda for cross cutting policies on the importance of play. It states that more than ever before local authorities must establish local needs and decide how best to meet these needs through different delivery routes including local authority Play Strategies and Local Area Agreements (LAAs).

19. **UN Convention on the rights of the child**

The principles in the Dudley play policy are founded on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) which was ratified by the UK Government in December 1991, and recognises the

significance and importance of appropriate play, recreation, rest and leisure activities in children's lives. Article 31 of that convention committed its signatories to supporting the child's right to engage in play and recreational activities, and to the promotion of appropriate provision.

20. **Local Performance Indicators**

The Audit Commission Library of Local Performance Indicators relating to the status of the local authority's policy and strategy for children's play, lists the following Performance Indicators (PIs):

- *The extent to which the authority has developed and adopted a comprehensive play policy and can act as a practical working tool to influence and guide any decisions made across all relevant departments, which affect or relate to children's play opportunities.*
- *How far the authority achieves in relation to the processes the indicator details will be determined by local objectives and resources, but it is important that achievement is related to goals as set out in the 'advanced', 'established' and 'emerging' criteria. (See appendix 5)*
- *The extent to which the development, adoption and implementation of a corporate play policy has involved users and providers, is responsive to local and diverse needs and demonstrates an understanding of the importance of play and the child's right to play.*

21. **Consulting and engaging with children and young people.**

A major strength of the Dudley play strategy has been the extensive consultation and participation with children and young people. The programme has followed the standards and principles set out in Dudley's formal Consultation Strategy and the draft Dudley Community Partnership Code of Practice but has gone some way beyond the normal standard consultation procedure.

22. Over the last six months the policy statements and objectives have been explored with children, young people, parents, carers and members of the general public across the Borough. The play strategy road show, entitled *Just Enjoy*, visited over twenty locations during June, July and August and engaged and consulted with over 4,000 children, young people and members of the general public. Over 6,000 *Just Enjoy* consultation cards were distributed and 1,737 children and

young people entered the Just Enjoy children's play competition. Over 4,000 wristbands with the consultation website address were also distributed. Over 1,500 children and young people took part in Just Enjoy media workshops including video, radio and internet kiosks and completing over 1,000 questionnaires.

23. Of the 1,737 children and young people who entered the Just Enjoy Children's Play competition, responses were received from all age groups with 6% from 0-5 year olds, 43% from 6-9, 38% 10-12 and 12% from 13-16. We also received 1% from 17-19 year olds, mainly from older young people with disabilities. Analysis of the data has shown that 41% of the respondents prioritised physical play, 33% social play and 17% creative play with 9% other forms of play including activities like video games. There has been a trend for younger children to prioritise physical play and older children and young people to prioritise social activities with friends. Very few have prioritised playing on their own as priority and overwhelmingly children and young people in Dudley see play as something they do with friends and other children. More examples of children's views, ideas and results can be seen on the Just Enjoy website www.justenjoy.tv

24. **Children and Young People's Plan**

The five outcomes of Every Child Matters - enjoy and achieve; stay safe; be healthy; make a positive contribution; and achieve economic well being, are all relevant to children's play. The importance of children's play was also reinforced by guidance produced by the Department for Education and Skills to support the production of Children and Young People's Plans (2005). This states that play strategies should link to the CYPPs, helping to meet the requirements of the Joint Area Review of the Ofsted Children's Services Inspection Framework. The Framework includes specific judgements and evidence directly relating to play provision. All the new developments, the Change for Children programme, Youth Matters and Extended Schools, are related to local delivery of children's services. In particular, they develop a play "offer" through consultation and partnerships, including the voluntary and community sector.

25. **The Early Years**

Play underpins all learning and development for all children and young people. It is particularly a key way young children learn that is both

enjoyable and challenging. Encouraging learning through play enriches children's early years and gives them a good start to life. Play is a safe and pleasurable way of finding out about the world and where new people, places and experiences are an almost daily occurrence. Play is the natural activity for children to enhance their physical and cognitive ability as well as providing important opportunities for their social and emotional development.

26. **Obesity Strategy**

The Public Service Agreement (PSA) to halt the year on year increase in obesity among children under 11 by 2010, the public health white papers *Choosing Health* (2004), *Delivering Choosing Health* and *Choosing Activity* (both 2005) all identified the contribution that play can make to improving children's fitness, health and well-being. Play is therefore an important part of the Government's and the Council's strategy to increase physical activity and meet its shared target. The PCT's Local Development Plan and the local authority's Children and Young People's Plan agree shared priorities to tackle child obesity. These have fed into the Local Area Agreement with the Government Office and Strategic Health Authority. The new Dudley play partnership will also have an important role in these arrangements.

27. **Better Public Spaces**

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) is responsible for leading the delivery of better public spaces, which are fundamental to inclusive and sustainable communities. Cleaner, safer, greener public spaces, in which play opportunities can flourish, are central to the Government strategy to improve the quality and safety of public spaces and local surroundings, and people's enjoyment of them. Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (PPG 17) (July 2002) "*Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation*" provides the national planning policy framework for the protection of existing children's play spaces and other open space areas that provide an important community resource and provide areas valuable for outdoor recreation. PPG 17 covers a broad range of open spaces including play areas, skateboard parks, multi-use games areas (MUGA), outdoor basketball courts, and other more informal open space areas, such as 'hanging out area' and sites that provide opportunities for informal outdoor play and recreation. The emerging Draft Dudley Play Strategy is supported by PPG 17 guidance as the Draft Dudley Play Strategy seeks to improve and

enhance the outdoor recreational offer of existing publicly accessible open space areas within the Dudley Metropolitan Borough for the benefit of the local community. The emerging Draft Dudley Play Strategy has clear linkages and an important role in supporting the work of other Council documents which focus on the enhancement and protection of children's play, outdoor sport and recreation areas. However, the emerging draft Dudley Play Strategy will continue to work with and support the Council's Cultural Strategy, the emerging draft Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (November 2006) and the Council's emerging Parks and Green Space Strategy and other relevant Council plans and strategies.

28. **Anti-social behaviour**

Tackling youth crime and reducing anti-social behaviour are key priorities for the Government. One of the main aspects of this is the provision of positive activities, which divert young people away from crime and help them develop the skills and behaviours to make the right choices, many of which include play and recreational activities. 'Respect' published in January 2006 and the Respect Action Plan refers to the enormous benefits of providing constructive and purposeful activities for young people, and supports the commitment made in Youth Matters to ensure that all young people have access to activities that they find interesting and exciting in their local area.

29. **Training and workforce development**

There is an urgent need for appropriate training for key employees working with children and young people. Play work is a highly skilled profession that enriches and enhances children's play through interaction with children and create an environment. All play workers and play managers should meet the national occupational standards, skills, knowledge and competence to perform the job required. A programme of training and workforce development is therefore being included in the strategic element of the lottery portfolio. Officers have already attended several national and regional conferences and have commissioned a local programme of training for successful applicants.

30. **Risk Management**

During the road show consultation programme it emerged that whilst most parents, carers and children placed a high priority on safe places to play, this could be misinterpreted as referring simply to the safety of equipped play areas and general play equipment. Ensuring equipped play areas are safe and all equipment is maintained to the required standards is important but the consultation has also demonstrated that above all, what is needed are play areas that are socially safe and free from the fear of attack, intimidation or bullying. Children need to feel an important part of the community not only by their parents but also by their neighbours and their peers.

31. **Play standards**

The law requires providers to assess and manage risk and adopt strategies to minimise accidents and injuries. This can sometimes lead to play environments that offer little real challenge or enjoyment and the development of often sterile and un-stimulating play spaces. Not only can this be a poor use of resources but also has led to the development of large and expensive facilities that are often underused by children and become a target for vandalism and abuse. Accidents cannot be eliminated. Indeed, it can be argued that falls and scrapes in childhood are not accidents at all, but part of growing up, learning about boundaries and how to manage risk. Both the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Courts widely accept this principle.

32. **Balancing risk**

Fundamental to the development of Dudley's play strategy is the need to ensure that policies and risk management procedures provide the right balance between children's needs and wishes and providers concerns about having a robust defence against claims for negligence. Sensible health and safety is about managing risks, not eliminating them all. The HSE has stated that it not in the business of stamping out children's simple pleasures. *"We recognise the benefits to children's development of play, which necessarily involves some risk, and this shouldn't be sacrificed in the pursuit of the unachievable goal of absolute safety."* Health and Safety Executive 2005.

33. **Managing risks locally**

Therefore, it is proposed that all play activities funded through the Just Enjoy programme are planned and managed using the Council's online

risk assessment and management service at www.offsite-mag.net . Over the last three years, over 12,000 activities have been planned and approved with no accident or claim against the Council's insurers on an offsite activity being made in this time. All children and young people will also have their own access card at www.activmag.net so they can record their activities and find out about the play programmes across the Borough.

34. **Corporate Parenting**

A high priority has been placed upon programmes for children and young people looked after by the local authority. It is proposed that all programmes funded by the lottery programme will be required to ensure that looked after children are included and will benefit directly from the initiative.

35. **Information Technology/e-Government**

The Just Enjoy programme has already pioneered the use of the internet in consulting and engaging with children, young people and potential applicants. All programme information and results of the consultation, including video, audio, animation and polling results are published on www.justenjoy.tv The site has received over 20,000 requests for information since it was opened in June 2006 and over 1,000 children have completed the online questionnaires. All applicants were required to submit an email application to the Just Enjoy website and all monitoring and project management will be coordinated online to save money increase efficiency and value for money. No new Council staff will be required to support this lottery programme as management time has been scheduled into the Development Office programme for the next four years. Additional, self employed professional workers will only be commissioned on short-term, time limited contracts.

36. **Neighbourhood Management**

The Neighbourhood Management team have been closely involved in developing the programme including supporting applicants and identifying local priorities. Several projects have been prioritised that fall within the most deprived neighbourhoods in the Borough.

37. **Asset Management**

As part of the development of the Dudley Play Strategy, an audit of play provision is being undertaken by Community and Cultural Services to submit with the lottery application in March. A Black Country wide working group has been convened and an audit of play provision, recreational provision and workforce development is being drawn up in partnership with the Black Country Consortium and the Learning and Skills Council. This will ensure that unnecessary duplication is avoided and similar new projects are not proposed too close to one another.

38. **Gershon Efficiency Savings**

Dudley Borough is fortunate in benefiting from a very diverse and energetic voluntary and community sector. The contribution of the voluntary and community sector (VCS) is vital to promoting the quality of life for thousands of children and local people. The Compact agreement between the Council and the voluntary and community sector aims to improve outcomes for local people. The three key principles of 1. strategic co-operation, 2. information, communication and consultation and 3. funding resources and support will all help to build capacity within the voluntary and community sector and improve the quality of life for local people. It is hoped that over 60% of the total funding for this programme will be directed or directly managed by the voluntary and community sector thus improving efficiencies for the Council and value for money. Significant cash saving should be made by the Council through the use of this external funding to target its priorities.

Finance

- 39. The Just Enjoy programme is being funded by £690,321 from the Big Lottery Fund over three years (2007/2010).
- 40. The Council is allowed to retain up to 10% of the grant for overall management, monitoring, evaluation and promotion.
- 41. The programme will be managed by the Development Office within the Directorate of Children's Services in partnership with the Directorate of the Urban Environment.
- 42. The Council is not required to commit any match funding to this programme although opportunities for in kind support and partnership

funding are being explored particularly with the voluntary and community sector programmes.

Law

43. The contents of the report relates to a range of statutory provisions including the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, the Children Act 2004, the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Open Spaces Act 1906, the Public Health Act 1875 and the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Equality Impact

44. The overall aim of the Council's equality and diversity policy is to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good relations between people of diverse backgrounds. The purpose of the Dudley play strategy equality and diversity impact assessment has been to pre-empt the possibility that the Dudley children's play policy could affect some racial or disability groups unfavourably. An initial race and disability equality impact assessment has involved screening the policy statements to see if they are relevant to race equality and diversity priorities.

45. **Race Impact Assessment**

All applications for funding have been screened for their impact upon disadvantaged communities including minority ethnic communities across the Borough. A review of the applications revealed that a significant proportion of applications from minority ethnic communities were late or failed to meet the application criteria. The awards panel therefore decided to prioritise those children and young people from the Borough's minority ethnic communities in the second stage of the application programme.

46. The Children and Young People's Partnership has explicitly stated that no children, especially those from disadvantaged communities, should be disadvantaged by the application process. Although several projects have been prioritised for children with disabilities and those children of disadvantaged communities, a full impact assessment will be central to the monitoring and evaluation of the policy and strategy over the next three years.

47. **Involvement of children and young people**

The involvement of children and young people has been at the heart of the development of the Dudley Play Strategy. Young people have been involved at all stages including in making the decisions for prioritisation and having the casting vote on the Children's play awards panel. They also will be involved closely in the overall monitoring and evaluation of the programmes over the next three years.

Recommendations

48. It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- endorse the Manifesto for Children's Play in Dudley. (Appendix 1)
- endorse the Policy for Children's Play in Dudley. (Appendix 2)
- endorse the portfolio of prioritised projects. (Appendix 4)
- agree to accept the £690,321 Big Lottery Fund award for children's play and work with the voluntary and community sector to achieve the contracted outcomes.

The Director of Children's Services working with the Director of the Urban Environment will be responsible for implementing the programme.



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List of Background Papers

Dudley Community Strategy – 2005/ 2020

Dudley Council Plan – Action Plan 2006/ 2009

Dudley Children and Young People’s Plan 2006/2009

Planning for Play - Big Lottery Fund 2006

Time for Play - DCMS 2006

Appendix 1

A Manifesto for Children's Play in Dudley.

The Dudley Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP) has agreed to support and promote the following manifesto statements and asks that they are adopted by the Council, children, young people and adults across the Borough.

- All children and young people have the right to play, as play is very important for their health, safety, physical, emotional and economic well-being and their personal, social, and intellectual development.
- All children and young people should help each other play and protect one another from accidents, bullying and dangerous or harmful activities.
- All those involved with providing children's play activities should talk to children and take note of their views, needs, rights and interests, particularly those hardest to reach and those at risk from social exclusion.
- A wide range of play experiences and opportunities should be available for disabled children and young people so that all provision becomes fully inclusive and accessible.
- All adults with a responsibility and influence over the upbringing, education, safety and well being of children and young people should make children's play a priority.
- All those who are responsible for public spaces should make them as safe and child friendly as possible.
- Special outdoor spaces should be set aside for children's play.
- Special arrangements should be made to support children's supervised and unsupervised play.
- All children need to experience adventure and risk in stimulating, exciting and challenging play environments.

Appendix 2

A Policy for Children's Play in Dudley

The following policy statements have been designed to support the broad manifesto statements and provide the support, training and provision to make them a reality for children and young people across Dudley.

The Dudley Children and Young People's Partnership believes that play is a basic entitlement for every child in Dudley. It is of fundamental importance for children and young people's health and well being, their relationships, their development and their learning.

Vital element of children's lives

Play is a vital element of all children's lives during their childhood, and to their development into healthy, happy and successful young people and independent adults. Provision for children's play is therefore essential to the health, well-being and prosperity of the wider community and the successful implementation of the aspirations and outcomes as set out in the Dudley Community Challenge - Community Plan, the Council Plan and the Children and Young People's Plan.

The views, needs, rights and interests of children

The partnership believes that children and young people's views, needs, rights and interests are central to all policy making, and that provision is made to raise their profile and improve their lives and well-being. This policy seeks to improve children's lives by setting out the values and principles necessary to underpin a good, worthwhile and meaningful Play Strategy for Dudley. The strategy will set out proposals for the development of high quality play opportunities and provision across the Borough.

Convention on the rights of the child

The principles in this policy are founded on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) which was ratified by the UK Government in December 1991, and recognises the significance and importance of appropriate play, recreation, rest and leisure activities in children's lives. Article 31 of that convention committed its signatories to supporting the child's right to engage in play and recreational activities, and to the promotion of appropriate provision.

Every Child Matters in Dudley

Play is a fundamental part of a healthy and happy childhood and its enjoyment is recognised by government as equally important to other outcomes for children. Because it is so fundamental, it also contributes to each of the five outcomes for children specified in Every Child Matters – *Being healthy – Staying safe – Enjoying and achieving – Making a positive contribution and - Economic well-being.*

Policy statements

Below are the draft policy statements and objectives which have been endorsed by the Children and Young People's Partnership and used during the last three-month consultation programme with children, young people and the general public.

The Cabinet is asked to endorse and adopt the following policy statements so that the play strategy and action plan can be developed further and submitted to the Big Lottery Fund in March 2007.

The Dudley Play Strategy

Policy Statements

Play is fundamental to children's health and well being throughout their childhood and during their transition into adulthood.

- *Children and young people engage in play for its own sake, not for any external goal or reward. Play is a significant and very important part of a child's life and culture and should be treated seriously and resourced appropriately.*
- *Play is critically important to children's physical, emotional and intellectual development and learning. Children and young people exhibit a behavioural imperative and instinctive desire to play. Through play children learn that which cannot be taught but that which can only be learnt through experience, such as self-confidence, self-reliance, creativity and resilience.*
- *A child's development, and their future capacity as an adult, will be affected by their access to a full range of creative, enjoyable and exciting play opportunities.*

Play is a natural and universal activity. It is a process with no necessary outcome.

- *Play is freely chosen, entered into by the child because s/he wishes to do so, personally directed under the control of the child playing, and intrinsically motivated, undertaken because it is satisfying for the child playing. Through play, children and young people find out about*

themselves, their abilities and interests. Play, therefore is one critical way children come to understand themselves and the world around them. Play helps children and young people to cope with difficult and stressful situations, and fosters social inclusion.

- *To support the child's right to participate fully in leisure, recreation, physical activity, and play, children and young people's views, needs, rights, and interests, including their full participation, must be sought, listened to and taken into account.*
- *Appropriate risk-taking can be an essential feature of children's and young people's play. Children and young people often want and need to take risks, innovate, and explore in order to find new limits, venture into new experiences and develop new skills, knowledge, understanding and capacities.*

Children and young people want to play, and are entitled to do so, in a variety of public spaces near to their homes. This includes both places designated for play and shared public space.

- *The impact of modern, urban society on children's lives significantly restricts their opportunity to play freely, and has resulted in a poverty of play opportunities in the general environment.*
- *Children, their families and society as a whole, benefit from an environment in which children and young people are able to play in public spaces free from unacceptable hazards and risks.*
- *Specialised play equipment can make a positive contribution to the overall provision. However, play equipment alone is neither necessary nor sufficient to create play environments of quality.*

Many adults, including play workers, childminders, nursery staff, classroom assistants, teachers, head teachers, governors, youth and professional workers, volunteers, parents, carers, relatives, neighbours and friends have a significant role in supporting and enabling children's play.

- *They can help ensure that children and young people have access to stimulating and challenging play environments.*
- *They can help children to experience appropriate and acceptable levels of risk whilst ensuring that all children and young people are safeguarded and kept safe from accidents, harm or bullying from other children or adults and from serious injury or death.*

Outcomes for play

Some children, due to their personal or family circumstances, or their social, economic and physical environment, have more limited access to play

opportunities than others. Therefore, the play needs of these children should be prioritised within the Council's policies and strategies.

The six objectives below form part of the draft play policy and are designed to inform the debate and future implementation of the Dudley Play Strategy, its action plan and planned outcomes for children.

Objective 1

- Promote the importance of play in relation to children and young people's health, safety, physical, emotional and economic well-being and their personal, social, and intellectual development, to all those that have a responsibility and influence over their upbringing, education, safety and well-being.

Objective 2

- To make appropriate public spaces as child friendly as possible, ensuring that parks, thoroughfares, nurseries, children's centres, schools, youth settings, housing estates and other public spaces within the Borough, are as safe and conducive as possible to children's play and outdoor activities.

Objective 3

- Develop a strategic and interdependent approach to the management and allocation of available play resources and funding, striking a balance based on need between supervised and unsupervised provision.

Objective 4

- Work towards ensuring that a wider range of play opportunities are available for disabled children and young people, and that all provision aims towards becoming fully inclusive and accessible.

Objective 5

- Work to ensure that all play providers actively seek to address the views, needs, rights, and interests of children and young people, particularly from hard-to-reach communities and those at risk from social exclusion including those children and young people looked after by the local authority.

Objective 6

- Aim to offer all children and young people the chance to encounter acceptable risks in stimulating, exciting and challenging play environments.

Appendix 3

Rationale and scope of the policy

From the outset, it was recognised that the terms '*play*' and '*children*' may disengage some older children and young people from the programme. Therefore, the CYPP adopted a more inclusive project title of 'JUST ENJOY,' chosen explicitly to match the outcomes of the Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and Youth Matters agenda.

Fit for purpose

In designing the play strategy the partnership has been conscious that the scope and format of the document must be fit for purpose. It has been important that the strategy represents and addresses the needs and aspirations of the children and young people as well as providing a framework for future operational decisions by the Council and other community and statutory partners. In addition, other policy initiatives, including children's centres, extended schools, the Youth Opportunities Fund and Youth Capital Fund, the work of the Dudley Youth Council and the Dudley Youth Council Manifesto need consideration.

Useful and relevant

If the strategy is to be successful, the policy statements need to be clear and unambiguous and provide a useful touchstone for future policy makers and funding bodies. For example, they must be relevant and useful to the Police when dealing with issues around intergenerational complaints and possible anti-social behaviour and planners when considering applications for housing development and transportation issues.

Children and Young People's Plan

The Children and Young People's Partnership - Children and Young People's Plan stresses the need for all children and young people to be accepted and take their place in a strong community. The plan supports activities that enable all children and young people to take part in the full range of play and leisure activities. The plan lists the desirable outcomes for children and young people.

- Are healthy, with a good sense of mental well-being.
- Take an interest in where they live and have a sense of belonging.
- Know their neighbours and are tolerant of people different from themselves.
- Help and support one another through friendship and shared activities.
- Have the opportunity to be creative and celebrate their cultural heritage.
- Work together to take pride in their community.
- Look out for each other, especially those less fortunate than themselves.

- Make appropriate use of facilities in the areas, particularly the opportunities to develop leisure time interests.
- Have opportunities to do well in their education and pursue other learning interests.
- Enjoy a good standard of living and are supported into rewarding jobs.
- Provide positive role models for each other and the wider community.
- Feel safe and that they have control over their lives.
- Are able to affect decisions about their lives and the delivery of local services.
- Have a good idea about what is on offer from service providers and how to access those services.
- Have pride in and care for their environment.

National aspirations

In promoting the aims of the strategy the CYPP supports the Big Lottery Fund and Play England's aspiration to...

- Create, improve and develop children and young people's free local play spaces and provide good, inclusive and accessible children's play services and facilities.
- Create, improve and develop children and young people's free local play spaces and opportunities throughout England, according to need.
- Support innovation and new ways of providing for children's play.
- Create a support and development infrastructure to ensure local agencies have the resources and skills to achieve the first two aims.
- Promote the long-term strategic and sustainable provision for play as a free public service to children.
- Ensure that local authorities work with other local stakeholders to develop children's play strategies and plans.
- Ensure that good, inclusive and accessible children's play services and facilities are provided locally.

Definition of play

The strategy has adopted the definition of play as outlined in the DCMS/DfES review of children's play *Getting Serious about Play* published in 2004 and the DCMS cross departmental Government report *Time for Play* in August 2006.

"Play means what children and young people do when they follow their own ideas and interests, in their own way and for their own reasons".

In our consultation with children and young people we have developed the following list of activities which describes what play is for them.

Running, climbing, skipping, hiding, playing games, jumping, practising cartwheels, throwing and kicking balls, making friends and falling out, growing things and telling stories, making music, climbing trees, taking risks, getting wet, exploring nature, building dens and getting dirty, dressing up, digging holes, swinging on tyres, shouting, inventing

games, making things, painting pictures, talking with friends, just sitting about, having a good time and loads of fun.

National Play Strategy for England

In 2002, a Government-funded, (DCMS) research programme into Children's Play undertaken by the Children's Play Council, revealed a dearth of strategic development in children's play provision and a long term decline in investment. The report highlighted the possible serious consequences for children and young people's physical, emotional and social health and development if the lack of play provision continued to deteriorate.

This work led to a recommendation that there should be national play strategy for England which would support and guide local authorities, voluntary organisations, community groups and other local agencies in providing a comprehensive range of free, inclusive spaces and opportunities for children's play.

Getting Serious About Play

In 2004, the report of the National Play Review, Getting Serious About Play (DCMS) 2004, chaired by Frank Dobson MP, recommended that a targeted strategic lottery programme for play provision should seek to create thousands of free, inclusive play spaces based on the needs and wishes of local children and young people. It recommended that the investment should be long-term, sustainable and strategic, with local authorities being given responsibility for coordinating plans with local partners. In January 2005, the government welcomed this review and its recommendations and announced that a cross-departmental strategic agenda for play would be established. In March 2005, the Big Lottery Fund announced a £155m fund to be based upon the Dobson report recommendations with particular emphasis on strategic development.

Enjoy and achieve

In addition, the Minister for Children stated that play will receive greater attention within the Every Child Matters inspection framework, as a key aspect of the 'enjoy and achieve' outcome of the change for children programme. More access to active, outdoor play opportunities has also been identified within the Choosing Health Physical Activity Action Plan (DOH), as a key to combating childhood obesity making the play agenda a serious issue for all Councils, Children's Services, Local Strategic Partnerships and Children and Young People's Partnerships.

Cross departmental national strategy

The Children's Play Council and the Children's Play Policy Forum recommend a cross-departmental national strategy for play that engages with the Every Child Matters, Choosing Health and Cleaner Safer Greener agendas and with other initiatives in the area of community regeneration in order to establish a

cohesive programme of long-term investment. The following recommended objectives set a useful agenda for the development of a play strategy for Dudley and are listed in full for information and background.

Open spaces

- A major focus on local streets, neighbourhoods, parks and open spaces, to make them safe, attractive play places for children and young people.

Supervised settings

- A pilot programme of supervised settings in the 100 most deprived areas, offering school-aged children and young people places to meet. These should have a range of indoor and outdoor activities, be inclusive and attractive to all local children and be free of charge. The centres, developed with local children, young people and communities, should be community resources offering a range of adventurous and challenging structured and unstructured activities and should be staffed by skilled play workers.

Play Rangers

- The development of teams of 'play rangers' in parks and open spaces in every town and city. These will be appropriately trained, child-friendly staff that get involved in activities and events, as well as helping to safeguard the parks and playgrounds in their area.

Upgrading existing equipped play areas

- A rolling 10-year investment programme to upgrade England's estimated 30,000 local play areas at a rate of 3,000 per year so they are welcoming, inclusive and, most important of all, enjoyable.

Extended Schools

- An expectation that all extended schools offering services to the wider community will provide good, year round, supervised and unsupervised outdoor play opportunities for children and young people from the school and the local neighbourhood.

Children Centres and childcare provision

- A commitment that all new childcare provision, children's centres and provision through extended schools should be inclusive and meet minimum standards for the quantity and quality of indoor and outdoor space, designed for children's physically active and creative play.

New Housing Development

- Legislation to ensure that all new housing developments employ child friendly design principles based on home zones, meet minimum standards for the quantity and quality of outdoor space and incorporate the development of flexible spaces whose uses can change over time in response to changes in local needs and wishes.

Play provision

- In every locality there will be a range of free, well maintained, good quality, culturally appropriate, supervised, semi-supervised and unsupervised play provision which meets the expressed needs of the vast majority of local children and young people.

Benefits

The benefits to children and young people will be that: -

- All this provision will be accessible, welcoming and engaging for children and young people who are disabled or have specific needs.
- Where they wish, children and young people and their families will be active participants in the development and management of this provision.
- All those working in play provision, whether paid or as volunteers, will be valued and able to get the training and support they need to provide for the children and young people's play needs.
- Local parks and open spaces will provide well maintained, welcoming play environments offering children and young people space and variety.
- Children and parents will feel confident that their local streets and neighbourhoods are safe places for play.
- All schools will recognise the role of play in education and development by ensuring that children have the time, resources, environments and supervision necessary by providing good play opportunities.
- Good play provision will be protected, maintained and developed to ensure it continues to meet local need.

Outcomes

The outcomes for children and young people will be: -

- The enjoyment of play and recreation
- Enhanced informal learning
- Better physical, mental and emotional health
- Develop social skills and responsibility
- Appreciation of the environment
- Understanding of risk and challenge
- Growing identity and self esteem
- Greater participation in sport, art and culture
- Reduced risk of offending and anti-social behaviour.

These statements have been taken from a paper published by the Children's Play Council in May 2005 which set out the agenda for the DCMS cross departmental Government report *Time for Play* published in August 2006.

Overall, the Dudley Play Strategy seeks to support the objectives set out in *Time for Play* but realises that much of this will take time. However, setting out our own policy statements, objectives and outcomes will be an important step towards improving play opportunities for children across Dudley.

Community participation and engagement

Following discussions with members of the Dudley Community Partnership (LSP) and outside agencies including Urban Play Solutions and Play England it was decided to begin the community engagement and consultation programme with a three month road show around the Borough. This began in June 2006 and concluded after the August Bank Holiday.

Over 7,000 consultation cards were distributed and over 4,000 children and young people participated in the activities. An analysis of the findings can be seen at www.justenjoy.tv

In addition, a wide range of stakeholders and community organisations have been contacted individually or through a local and regional press campaign. The Just Enjoy programme received front-page coverage in the regional evening newspaper during August 2006.

Action Plan timetable for development, consultation and implementation

The overall action plan timetable for the development, consultation and implementation of the programme is listed below.

November – December 2005

- Initial discussions with key stakeholders on the approach to the programme and issues around leadership, management and consultation.

January – March 2006

- Consultation with the Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP).

March – May 2006

- Development of the policy statements and key objectives.
- Development of the promotion and participation programme with children, young people, parents and carers and wider community.

- Road show commissioned including project design, marketing, press campaign and website.

June – August 2006

- Play Strategy road show launched across the Borough. Over twenty venues and activities selected to cover a wide range of interests, social and geographical areas.
- Launch of the Just Enjoy website (www.justenjoy.tv)

August – October 2006

- Programme opens for applications with regional press campaign.

September – November 2006

- Consultation on policy statements and objectives, analysis of the audit, and applications for funding.

November – December 2006

- The prioritisation and development of the project portfolio.

December 2006

- Report to Dudley Council Cabinet

January – February 2007

- Endorsement by the Children and Young People's Partnership and Local Strategic Partnership appeals process.

March 2007

- Submission to the Big Lottery Fund for assessment.

September 2007

- Funding awarded and projects begin. Monitoring and evaluation programme begins.

December 2010

- Lottery programme closes with final report and recommendations for sustainability.

Audit methodology

Although Dudley Council has a long tradition of supporting the provision of *equipped children's play areas* in public parks and open spaces across the Borough, this is the first time a broad approach has been taken in engaging

the views of children and young people and members of the local community in children's play. The opportunity to involve a large number of children and young people with partners of the local strategic partnership and members of the community has provided an opportunity to review present policy and provision and take a fresh look at what is meant by children's play.

Children's Services

The appointment of the Director of Children's Services in October 2005 and the designation of a Commissioner for Children and Young People in April 2006, has provided a unique opportunity to focus upon outcomes for children rather than simple processes and provision. The remodelling of the Council and the move towards a Children's Trust for Dudley also provides new opportunities to promote and support children's play across the Borough.

Recent Investment

Recent investment by the Big Lottery Fund of £372,000 through the Transforming Your Space programme and £3.4 million through the ODPM Liveability programme has enabled the Council to transform many of the public parks and open spaces around the Borough. Consultation with the 26 Friends of Public Parks around the Borough identified the need of improved provision for children and young people, particularly around provision of children's play areas and provision for sport and physical activity.

Physical activity and obesity

The work of the Dudley LSP - Physical Activity Task Group (PATG) with members from the primary care trusts, leisure and cultural services, transport and children's services, has supported the provision of 2 hours of high quality physical education and physical activity with children and young people (5-16) across the Borough. Participation rates in Dudley for 2004/5 were 73% (69% nationally) and in 2005/6 84% (75% nationally). Although data on individual children's play is not yet available, a new programme sponsored by the Big Lottery Fund and the PCT will allow all Dudley children and young people the opportunity to record their free play time and access provision across the Borough using a new access card. (See www.activemag.net)

An audit of play spaces

An essential element of the final play strategy will be the systematic review of the types of spaces that children across the Borough consider suitable for play. A triangulated approach to the audit has been adopted based on three sources of data. The three areas adopted are as follows.

Desk top research (June- October 2006)

Desk top research building on data collated from the open space and green space strategies, skate park strategy and the work developed for the Transforming Your Space, Liveability and Active England programmes.

Participation road show (June – August 2006)

Results of the participation road show with children, young people and community members including open air workshops, face-to-face interviews, questionnaires, competitions, online questionnaires, multimedia and artwork workshops.

Just Enjoy applications (August – October 2006)

Open invitation to children, young people and community partners to come forward with proposals for meeting play need in their community.

Coding and Analysis

Following the coding and analysis of all of sources of data, an action plan for development will be designed including those projects selected for submission to the Big Lottery Fund in March 2007.

Emerging issues

The three month consultation with children and young people across the Borough has revealed that young people have a desire to play and hang out in almost all publicly accessible space that includes streets, town centres, parks, playing fields and amenity areas as well as the more recognisable facilities such as equipped play and multi-use games areas.

Involving children and young people

Although considerable investment and funding has been targeted into equipped play areas in public parks and open spaces across the Borough, few children and young people identified these areas as *'their own'* as few seem to feel they have been consulted or involved in their development. As the consultation road show moved across the Borough it became clear that future play provision and activities must not be restricted just to designated *'reservations'* of play, sport or leisure provision provided by the Council. If the strategy is to meet the needs of all children and young people across the Borough, every attempt must be made to make all environments that children choose to inhabit suitable and as safe as possible for active play purposes.

Small equipped play areas

Early indications are that we may well need to reduce the number of less used and well equipped play areas across the Borough in favour of improving provision overall. Children and young people are not necessarily placing a value on the traditional small Council managed equipped areas. These are seen by children and young people as out-of-date and provide little play value. Often the cost of maintenance and refurbishment provides poor value for money when Council funding is hard to find.

Recent investment in equipped play areas

Following successful applications to the Big Lottery Fund Transforming Your Space and ODPM Liveability programmes considerable investment has been made in improving play areas in public parks. The Council has placed the regeneration of public parks as a high priority for the well-being, health and enjoyment for children, young people and members of the community. Most people live within 20 minutes of a public park and therefore it will be essential to place any new and improved play areas at the heart of the equipped play area management and provision for the Borough.

Section 106 agreements

It has been a tradition for the Council to use the funding generated under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Section 106 for the development of equipped plays areas within designated geographical areas of planning development. Section 106 'planning gain' agreements based on the recommendations of NPFA six acre standard, are currently used to secure both capital and revenue monies to provide play areas within the locality of new developments. As part of the play strategy implementation programme, Dudley may wish to review its framework for the negotiation and use of Section 106 agreements in respect of children's play. It is proposed that this policy is continued but aligns with the developing local standards for play and supports future action plans and decisions by the new Dudley Play Partnership.

Parks for people and play

Dudley Council maintains a wide range of public open spaces ranging from informal local amenity green spaces to five formal and staffed public parks. Recognised as one of the leading parks authorities within the West Midlands, the £3.5 million ODPM Liveability programme has funded a significant parks for people improvement programme. The main aim of this project being to create a self-sustaining network of community groups that will work in partnership with the Council towards the regeneration of the parks and open spaces. Improving green spaces for use by children and young people is a key aim of this programme.

Play activities

A range of organised community events take place within parks and open spaces across the Borough with the aim of increasing participation by young people in healthy outdoors activities. These include:

Sport

Supervised multi-sport sessions include games such as mini-soccer, rounders, cricket and fun athletics.

Family Fun Days

Park held events that aim to cater for all members of the family and involve a range of sport, health walks, dance, drama and craft workshops.

After School Clubs

These aim to provide children and young people with the opportunity to gain some skills in a variety of sports within the community parks, away from the school setting. Qualified coaches offer a six-week programme covering valuable core aspects of the chosen sports. This is helping to maximise parks usage by children and young people.

Play areas

There are fifty-two play areas situated within the Borough all of which are maintained by the Council and undergo a formal safety inspection and cleanse three times per week. All of the areas have been assessed for their accessibility by disabled people and there is a continual ongoing programme of refurbishment.

Standards and typology of play space

A strategic audit of play space across the Borough is currently being undertaken with the aim of identifying where and what kind of play opportunities there are, the overall quality of the play opportunities and their general accessibility. In order to select, code and make sense of the available data, a typology for play space has been proposed based upon the principles that play opportunities should be:

- **free of charge**
- **where children are free to come and go**
- **where they are free to choose what they do.**

These standards mirror closely the areas currently being used by the Children's Play Council as part of a pilot CPA performance indicator programme. It is hoped that this will enable Dudley to measure its performance against nationally recognised benchmarking criteria.

A typology of Dudley's play space

The list below categorises the designations for describing play space across the Borough. Although it is not intended to list every single space or play space during the audit, the typology will enable the Council to build, over time, a comprehensive map of the children's play space across the Borough to help inform and support future policy, planning and funding decisions. Over the next twelve months, it will be an aim of the Council to map and monitor the play provision with regard to the categories below using various methods including the local GIS database.

Local standards for play

The local standards for play will aim to provide a range of free play experiences within reasonable walking, cycling or travelling distance from where children and young people live and play. It is proposed that the strategy should work towards at least three play experiences being available within twenty minutes walking distance of where children and young people live.

Types of play facilities

Door-step spaces and facilities

- Small equipped play areas furnished primarily for young children
- Neighbourhood amenity green spaces (unequipped)
- Home zone, traffic calming or equivalent.

Neighbourhood spaces and facilities

- Large equipped play areas primarily for children aged 5–11
- Satellite parks
- Junior bike, skate and skateboard facilities and kick-about areas.

Local spaces and facilities for play

Supervised

- Adventure playgrounds
- Open access play centres
- Open access play schemes
- Play ranger and outreach play projects.

No formal supervision

- School playgrounds (open out of school hours)
- Neighbourhood equipped play areas (eight+ items)
- Teenage wheeled sports area
- Ball courts, multi-use games areas
- hangout/youth shelters
- Public parks
- Playing fields/recreation grounds freely available for children to use.
- canals, woodlands and natural areas.

By cross checking the above provision with other relevant indices it will be possible to identify gaps in provision and future priorities. For example, the correlation of crime and anti-social behaviour statistics to the provision of area related facilities and play activities.

Risk, challenge and play standards

During the road show consultation programme it emerged that whilst most parents and children placed a high priority on safe places to play, this could

be misinterpreted as referring simply to the safety of equipped play areas and general play equipment. Ensuring equipped play areas are safe and all equipment is maintained to the required standards is important but the consultation has also demonstrated that above all, what is needed are play areas that are socially safe and free from the fear of attack, intimidation or bullying. Children need to feel an important part of the community not only by their parents but also by their neighbours and their peers.

Promoting the value of play

It was felt that more needs to be done to explain and describe the importance of play to a wider audience. All too often, some members of the general public see children and young people together in public spaces as a threat, out of control and unsafe to themselves and others. It will be important for the play strategy to balance the need for children to experience acceptable risk and overcome challenges within an atmosphere of support and acceptance. Play provision that does not cater for this need could fail and children will seek their thrills elsewhere. A degree of managed risk in play provision is therefore essential.

Appendix 4

BLF Children's Play Initiative - Dudley MBC Priority Portfolio

Prioritised projects

*The following projects are being worked up for second stage assessment. Only those projects that are endorsed by the Children and Young People's Partnership will be submitted to the Big Lottery Fund for national assessment. It is unlikely that all applications below for multi use games areas (*) can be funded through this programme.*

1	Stage Two	Capital	Brierley Hill Community Youth Forum - Chapel Street (MUGA) *
2	Stage Two	Revenue	KIDS West Midlands - Staffing
3	Stage Two	Capital	Coseley School - Adventure playground
4	Stage Two	Revenue	Free2Play - Play rangers project
5	Stage Two	Revenue	Roberts Environment Zone - environmental play rangers (20 schools)
6	Stage Two	Capital	Dudley Children's Services - Ten acre fields skate park
7	Stage Two	Capital	Belle Vue Primary School - Centre of Excellence for Children's Play
8	Stage Two	Capital	Ellowes Hall Sports College - Play wall
9	Stage Two	Revenue	Royal Mencap Society Me2 Project - staffing
10	Stage Two	Revenue	Rollercoaster's Summer Fun Programme
11	Stage Two	Revenue	Dudley MBC Culture and Community Services - free swimming
12	Stage Two	Capital	Champion Youth Church - portable skate park
13	Stage Two	Revenue	NCH Dudley Young Carers - family play activity evenings
14	Stage Two	Revenue	Fizzog Theatre Company - play promotion
15	Stage Two	Capital	Brierley Hill Community Youth Forum - community play gardens
16	Stage Two	Capital	Wrens Nest Primary - community play area
17	Stage Two	Revenue	Home and Hospital - Play activity programme
18	Stage Two	Revenue	Community Transport Dudley - Supervised free travel
19	Stage Two	Capital	Dudley Children's Services - Sledmere community MUGA *
20	Stage Two	Capital	Netherbrook Primary School - Saltwells community MUGA *
21	Stage Two	Capital	Windsor High School – MUGA *
22	Stage Two	Capital	Dudley Children's Services Oval MUGA and Youth Shelter *
23	Stage Two	Revenue	Youth Empowerment Scheme Online promotion
24	Stage Two	Capital	Friends of Wollescote Park – MUGA *

The following projects are listed in reserve priority order. Should the Big Lottery Fund withdraw any of the projects above they will be reconsidered in priority order. However, this is unlikely and these projects will need to seek funding from elsewhere.

25	Reserve	Groundwork Black Country - Our Space
26	Reserve	NCH Stourbridge Family Centre
27	Reserve	Ellowes Hall Sports College - After school, weekends and holiday club
28	Reserve	Dudley Children's Services Maitland Road - Adventurous activities for LA Children
29	Reserve	Brierley Hill Community Youth Forum - Hawbush Sports and Play Area
30	Reserve	Dudley Muslim Association - East in West
31	Reserve	Bromley-Pensnett Council - play area
32	Reserve	Springfield Neighbourhood Tenants and Residents Association -Play Area
33	Reserve	Ramparts Skate park
34	Reserve	Olive Hill Primary School - Toy, Activity Bank and Play Area
35	Reserve	Saltmine Trust Blue Balloon Theatre Showcase
36	Reserve	St Edmund and St John C of E Primary School - Adventure Play Area
37	Reserve	Dudley MBC Managed Neighbourhood - The Oval Ten acre Lane Football
38	Reserve	Thorns Primary School Student Council - Playground equipment/areas
39	Reserve	Dudley MBC - Leaps and Bounds Dance Project
40	Reserve	Dudley Children's Services - Looked After Children
41	Reserve	Dudley Children's Services Dudley Performing Arts Summer Festival
42	Reserve	NCH Kate's Hill and Sledmere Children's Centre Under 5 Fun Zone
43	Reserve	Jesson's Primary School - Learning to Play Area

44	Reserve	Wallbrook Primary School - School Council - Outdoor Play Area
45	Reserve	Foxyards Primary School Before and After School Club
46	Reserve	Friends of Wychbury Park and Woodlands Walks - Equipped Play Area
47	Reserve	Wollescote St Andrews Scout Group - Play Area
48	Reserve	Dudley MBC Culture and Community Services - Dudley Community Olympics
49	Reserve	Newfield Park Primary School - Safe and Shady Playgrounds
50	Reserve	Fairhaven Primary School - Adventure Playground
51	Reserve	Brierley Hill Community Youth Forum - Football Projects
52	Reserve	Thorns Community College Smart Active After School Club
53	Reserve	Withymoore Community Association - Play Area
54	Reserve	Highgate Primary School Adventure Playground
55	Reserve	Withymoore Primary School Stay and Play Club
56	Reserve	Highgate Primary School After School Club - Summer Programme
57	Reserve	Brierley Hill Primary School Helping Hands
58	Reserve	Kate's Hill Primary School - Play Area
59	Reserve	Manor Way Primary School - Play Zone
60	Reserve	Mount Pleasant Primary School - Play Area
61	Reserve	Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust Full time Hospital Play Specialist
62	Reserve	Stourton Starlets Cheerleaders Squad
63	Reserve	St James C of E Primary School - Play Area
64	Reserve	Redhill School - Outdoor improvements
65	Reserve	Community Social Change Services - Music workshops
66	Reserve	Red Hall Primary School - Adventure trails
67	Reserve	Earls High School - outside table tennis
68	Reserve	Pensnett School of Technology - Outdoor Table Tennis
69	Reserve	Touring Arts Projects
70	Reserve	Tenterfields Primary School - School Council - Outdoor Play Area
71	Reserve	Dudley Children's Services Maitland Road - Play, music and art equipment
72	Reserve	St Chads Primary School - Playground improvements
73	Reserve	Windsor High School Quad Garden
74	Reserve	Champion Youth Church - Play for Free
75	Reserve	Windsor High School Fitness Instructor
76	Reserve	St James's Parochial Church Council - Intergenerational Project Group
77	Reserve	Volunteer Reading Help Black Country - Literacy Learning Through Play
78	Reserve	Caslon Primary School Extreme Fun Club - New mobile classroom
79	Reserve	Windsor High School Music Recording Project

Seventeen applications were reviewed and ruled ineligible either through being submitted late or failing to submit a hard signed copy and email copy by the closing date. Following advice from the Big Lottery Fund five applications for marketing training, evaluation, monitoring and promotion will be incorporated in the strategic management element of the programme.

Appendix 5

Local Performance Indicator LIB 115

This supplement reproduces from the Audit Commission Library of Local Performance Indicators, the local PI relating to the status of the local authority's policy and strategy for play.

Rationale

This indicator identifies:

- *The extent to which the authority has developed and adopted a comprehensive play policy.*
- *The extent to which the play policy can act as a practical working tool to influence and guide any decisions made across all relevant departments, which affect or relate to children's play opportunities.*
- *How far an authority achieves in relation to the processes the indicator details will be determined by local objectives and resources, but it is important that achievement is related to goals as set out in the 'advanced', 'established' and 'emerging' criteria. The indicator should be supplemented by further information relating to quality and cost effectiveness determined according to local priorities.*
- *The extent to which the development, adoption and implementation of a corporate play policy has involved users and providers, is responsive to local and diverse needs and demonstrates an understanding of the importance of play and the child's right to play.*

Definition

Status of the local authority's development and implementation of a corporate play policy (advanced, established, emerging)

The status of the local authority's contribution should be matched as closely as possible to the criteria for 'advanced', 'established' or 'emerging' as detailed in the table below, against each of the components A to I.

Please note that the policy must meet all the criteria to qualify at the higher levels. 'Advanced', 'Established' and 'Emerging' each identify the different actions required against each of the component elements of a play policy and strategy, as identified in A–I.

To assess your position, review each section to identify for each of the criteria A–I below which best describes your current position. For example, if your policy has identified the range of authority services with relevance to play and their responsibilities, but has not provided guidance to staff in these departments, then 'tick' column 'Established' for row A.

Continue working through the criteria, selecting for the corresponding line the row which best describe your current position. Your position to be reported for part (a) of this indicator is that for which you have been able to tick all the behaviours required, or demonstrated behaviour required at the higher level, i.e. the programme must meet all the criteria to qualify at the higher levels.

For example, an advanced status would need to demonstrate evidence for all the criteria A–I as detailed in the ‘Advanced’ row. For an authority that meets five of the criteria shown in the ‘Established’ section, but can only demonstrate the action detailed in the ‘Emerging’ column for the remaining four, the authority’s policy and strategy for play would be reported as having an ‘emerging’ status.

Number of ‘advanced’ criteria met as a percentage of the total advanced criteria of the components detailed, the number of these for which the authority meets the criteria as detailed for an ‘Advanced’ plan, as a percentage of the total nine component areas detailed.

Self-assessment tool

The initial self-assessment of the emerging Dudley play policy and strategy (November 2006) is that the Council is nearly at “**established**” status overall with 6 key areas already **established** and 2 **advanced**. Only “**a clear framework for implementation and delivery**” is yet to be completed and therefore is at “**emerging**” status.

The Council has **good capacity to improve** although further work is now needed at operational level across the Council to produce a framework and action plan at directorate, divisional and community partner level.

A (Dudley self assessment – Established)

The policy is widely scoped, including any local authority services that might directly or indirectly affect children’s play opportunities.

Advanced

The policy clearly identifies the range of authority services with relevance to play and their respective responsibilities. Supporting guidance is provided to the relevant staff in these departments to ensure that the policy is implemented in practice.

Established

The policy clearly identifies the range of authority services with relevance to play and their responsibilities.

Emerging

The policy broadly identifies services that have relevance to play.

B (Dudley self assessment – Established)

The play policy clearly identifies the importance of play.

Advanced

The policy includes a clear assessment of the specific needs and priorities for the local area, identifying, for example, particular locations where action is required. It displays a clear understanding of:

- *the child's right to play, in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*
- *why a variety of play opportunities is important*
- *defines play, play opportunities, children and acceptable risks.*

Established

The policy includes a broad assessment of needs and priorities for the local area, but does not identify specific areas of action. It displays a broad understanding of:

- *the child's right to play*
- *why play is important. It defines play, play opportunities, and acceptable risks.*

Emerging

The policy shows an understanding of why play is important, and defines what 'play' and 'play opportunities' mean. The policy is couched in general terms and does not identify the specific requirements and priorities of the local area.

C (Dudley self assessment – Established)

The policy is integrated with other relevant community, corporate and departmental plans.

Advanced

The policy is consistent with the authority's corporate objectives, and identifies the role of play in contributing to the achievement of these objectives. The policy should be linked to a corporate strategy on children and young people. Where there is no separate corporate strategy for younger people, links to other corporate strategies should be explicit. It considers or makes reference, where relevant, to other existing activities and corporate or departmental plans which may affect the delivery of the play policy

Established

The policy is consistent with the authority's corporate objectives, and identifies the role of play in contributing to the achievement of these of objectives. The policy does not consider or make reference to specific departmental plans or activities, which may affect the delivery of the play policy.

Emerging

The policy is a stand-alone document that makes little or no reference to corporate or relevant departmental policies and activities

D (Dudley self assessment – Advanced)

The policy was developed drawing on consultation with a range of relevant stakeholders.

Advanced

Consultation included:

- *public sector agencies, including tiers in local government*
- *the voluntary sector*
- *adults, children, young people and the private sector from the local communities.*

Consultation was: 'Inclusive', drawing on views from a cross-section of people, representative of the local community as a whole, with particular focus on children of different ages, parents and young people, and including appropriate representation from black and minority ethnic groups, traveller families and children and families with disabled children.

Established

Consultation included:

- *public sector agencies, including tiers in local government*
- *the voluntary sector.*

Consultation was: 'Inclusive', drawing on views from a cross-section of people, representative of the local community as a whole, with particular focus on children of different ages, parents and young people, and including appropriate representation from black and minority ethnic groups, traveller families and children and families with

Emerging

Consultation included:

- *public sector agencies, including tiers in local government.*

No steps were taken to ensure that consultation included a cross-section of the population representative of the wider community.

E (Dudley self assessment – Advanced)

The policy has been endorsed by the chief executive and/or members of the relevant committee.

Advanced

Yes and engaged for the future.

Established

Endorsed.

Emerging

No

F (Dudley self assessment – Established)

The play policy is based on a clear baseline assessment of local needs and identifies current provision and opportunities for play.

Advanced

In developing the policy, the authority has carried out and included an assessment of the current range of provision throughout the authority area. The policy identifies specific local needs and how these are addressed by the current provision, and/or where there is a shortfall.

Established

The policy includes a broad assessment of needs and priorities for the local area, but does not identify specific areas of action. The authority has not carried out and included an assessment of the current range of provision throughout the authority area, and how this relates to identified needs. The policy is couched in general terms and does not identify the specific requirements and priorities of the local area.

Emerging

The authority has not carried out and included an assessment of the level and suitability of the current provision.

G (Dudley self assessment – Emerging)

The play policy provides a clear framework for implementation and delivery.

Advanced

The play policy identifies:

- *key principles and a clear framework for the planned development of play opportunities*
- *short, medium and long-term priorities and target delivery dates*
- *resource implications and allocation*
- *a plan for stakeholder involvement*
- *mechanisms to monitor and review arrangements.*

Established

The play policy identifies:

- *key principles and a clear framework for the planned development of play opportunities*
- *short, medium and long-term priorities and target delivery dates*
- *mechanisms to monitor and review arrangements.*

It does not clearly identify:

- *resource implications and allocation*
- *a plan for stakeholder involvement.*

Emerging

The play policy identifies:

- *general principles and an outline framework for the planned development of play opportunities.*

It does not clearly identify:

- *short, medium and long-term priorities and target delivery dates*
- *resource implications and allocation*
- *a plan for stakeholder involvement.*

No mechanisms have been identified to monitor and review arrangements.

H (Dudley self assessment – Established)

A play policy-working group with key partners has been established for delivery.

Advanced

Yes, with

- *clear terms of reference*
- *allocated resources and the authority to drive the policy forward*
- *an agreed action plan identified and in the process of being*

delivered.

Established

Yes, with

- *clear terms of reference*
- *a commitment to secure resources and responsibility to drive the policy forward*
- *an agreed action plan identified.*

Emerging

Yes, with clear terms of reference. However, no resources have yet been committed nor any action plan identified.

I (Dudley self assessment – Established)

A framework is in place for monitoring progress and regular reporting on plans.

Advanced

A framework is in place that ensures:

- *delivery against targets and objectives is monitored and on a minimum of a quarterly basis*
- *progress is reported back to management and stakeholders*
- *the policy/strategy is reviewed annually, with a comprehensive review at least every five years.*

Established

A framework is in place that ensures:

- *delivery against targets and objectives is monitored on at least a quarterly basis*
- *progress is reported back to management and stakeholders*
- *there are no plans in place for the review of the policy.*

Emerging

There is no framework in place.