

**PLAYBUILDER MONEY 2009**

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER:** Portfolio Holder - Councillor Hugh Branney.  
**LEAD OFFICER:** Acting Head of Leisure and Environmental Services - Cath Coombs.  
**REPORT AUTHOR:** Parks Development Officer – Russell Maddams.

**Summary and Recommendation:**

Copeland Borough Council have received £85,901 from the national play builder fund to pay for the improvement of play provision within the Borough.

The Open spaces Team propose to allocate the money to up dating the play areas in Harbour and Bransty wards.

Harbour and Bransty wards have the greatest number of young people aged between 0 to 15 years of age after Mirehouse and Hensingham wards who have both has their play equipment up dated in recent years as part of the Big Lottery play initiative.

**It is recommended that:** The executive agrees to the principal of spending phase one of the playbuilder money (£85,911) on up grading the three play areas (Castle Park, Bransty & New Road) in Bransty and Harbour wards.

The determination relating to the spending of the Big Lottery money is delegated to the Acting Head of Leisure and Environmental services in consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Head of Finance and Management Information systems and Portfolio Holder.

**1. INTRODUCTION.**

1.1 Cumbria has been allotted £1.1 Million from the Playbuilder fund to spend on improving the play provision within the County over the next two years. The money is being administered by Cumbria County Council through their Children's Services Department.

1.2 The £1.1 Million pounds has been split up between the six authorities (Borough of Barrow & Furness, South Lakeland District, Eden District, Carlisle City, the Borough of Copeland & Borough of Allerdale) that cover the county of

Cumbria, with the split being based on the numbers of children living within each of these areas and their respective deprivation rates.

1.3 The money is to be released in two payments with Copeland Borough Council receiving £85,901 in 2009 and a further £89,000 in 2010.

1.4 There are currently thirty three play areas within Copeland of which the Council manages twenty one directly. These are made up of a mixture of multi youth games areas, play areas and a bike and skate park. With the Council currently working with locally constituted community groups to establish five new play areas using the £200,000 play builder money allotted to the Council by the Big Lottery.

1.5 The Big Lottery project is on going with only Hensingham and Gosforth play areas completed, Seascale under construction and Briscoe Mount and Cleator Moor due to start shortly.

## **2. PROPOSAL**

2.1 The Open Spaces Team proposes up grading of Castle Park, Bransty and High Street play areas. This proposal has been put forward following research into the population figures in order to yield the maximum benefit to young people within the borough.

2.2 The Population statistics for the Borough show Whitehaven as having the greatest concentration of people aged between 0 to 15 years of age, with the wards of Mirehouse and Hensingham having the greatest number of young people in this age bracket.

2.3 Both Mirehouse and Hensingham wards have been provided with funding to build new play areas in recent years with Hensingham being opened in 2008

2.4 The next two wards with the highest population of people aged between 0 to 15 years of age are Harbour and Bransty wards, hence the proposal to up grade Castle Park, Bransty and High street play area which are situated within these wards.

### **3. OPTIONS**

3.1 The plan is to extend Castle Park play area by installing additional equipment up to the value of £55,000, allocate £20,000 to up grade New Street play area and use the remaining money to install one multi unity into Bransty play area.

3.2 All the existing play equipment with a useful safe life expectancy will be serviced and repainted in-conjunction with the up grading of the play areas in order to utilize the money most efficiently as there is a cost implication involved in dismantling old play equipment

3.3 The option proposed by the Open Spaces Team will also keep down the cost involved in installing new safety surfaces as the new equipment will be an extension to existing play areas which are already laid with safety surfacing.

3.4 Another other option for consideration is looking at all the Council's play facilities that need up dating and spending money up dating those that are in the worse condition or that have been in situ for the longest period of time.

3.5 Consideration could also be given to building one new play area using the playbuilder money allotted. With the location for the play area being strategically based so that the new play facility will provide maximum benefits to the young people of the borough

### **4. ARGUMENT**

4.1 The proposal put forward by the Open Spaces Team will meet the criteria laid in the Playbuilder fund which is to prove first quality access to play for young people aged between 8 to 13 years of age.

4.2 The upgrading of the play areas situated within Harbour and Bransty wards will be accessible to the a large number of young people; with these wards having the third and fourth largest population of young people in the borough behind Hensingham and Mirehouse wards.

4.3 An in depth consultation process will be undertaken to ensure the play equipment installed meets the requirements of the target audience with all the local schools being involved in the consultation process.

4.4 The second phase of playbuilder money (£89,000) due to be paid in 2010 will be used in Frizington and Kells ward to upgrade their play facilities, a further £200,000 from the Big Lottery fund is being spent on creating five new play facilities within the borough (Seascale, Gosforth, Hensingham, Briscoe Mount and Cleator Moor)

4.5 This division of resources ensures the money received by the Council in recent years is utilized across the entire borough and not focused on one area.

4.6 The proposals have been made bearing in mind the Councils Play strategy which aims to improve the range and quality of play facilities for young people living within the borough with the core objectives of increasing their physical fitness and social interaction skills.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

5.1 The proposal put forward to the executive by the Open Spaces Team is to utilise phase one of the playbuilder money (£85,911) to upgrade the three play areas (Castle Park, Bransty & New Street) situated within Bransty and Harbour wards in order to improve the quality of play provision within the Borough.

5.2 The proposal was put forward to maximize the benefits to the target audience young people aged 0 to 15 years based on the population statistics for Whitehaven which has the greatest concentration of young people within the Borough.

5.3 The proposal supports Copeland Borough Council's Play strategy which aims to improve access to play facilities for young people within the borough with the core objectives of increasing their physical fitness and social interaction skills.

5.4 The Copeland play strategy was written using the principles laid down in the Governments Every Child Matters Legislation.

5.5 The up grading of the play areas in the Bransty and Harbour wards will meet the criteria laid down in the Playbuilder funding guidelines which seeks to provide twenty two high quality play facilities within Cumbria that cater for young people aged between 8 to 13 years of age with the target audience being girls in this age bracket.

5.6 The second phase of playbuilder money (£89,000) due to be paid in 2010 will be used in Frizington and Kells ward to upgrade their play facilities, this coupled with the Big Lottery money (£200,000) used to create five new play facilities in Seascale, Gosforth, Hensingham, Briscoe Mount and Cleator Moor ensures the money granted to the Council in recent years is utilised across the entire borough.

5.7 The Executive is therefore asked to support the proposal to spend phase one of the play builder money on upgrading the play areas in Bransty and harbour wards. Delegating the determination of details to the Head of Leisure and Environmental Services in consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Head of Finance and Management Information Systems and Portfolio Holder

## **6. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOURCES OF FINANCE)**

6.1 Any implications will be cost neutral on this Council as the play areas highlighted for upgrading are already included in the Open Spaces weekly inspection routine and met from existing revenue budgets.

6.2 The Playbuilder grants represent new and additional funding to support specific (ring-fenced) expenditure and this will need to be reflected in the approved budget for 2009/10 and 2010/11. Where the expenditure will result in an enhancement to, or creation of, physical play facilities i.e. new construction, extension to existing facilities, this will need to be reflected in the Capital Programme, matched by expenditure. If the expenditure relates to refurbishment of existing facilities, i.e. it is a repair to existing facilities, then this will need to be reflected in the revenue budget.

## **7. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PLAN**

Providing additional play facilities within the Borough will help improve the provision of leisure facilities within the Borough in support of the Corporate Plan.

**List of Appendices:** None.

**List of Background Documents:** None.

**List of Consultees:** Corporate Team, Cllr Hugh Branney.

## **CHECKLIST FOR DEALING WITH KEY ISSUES**

Please confirm against the issue if the key issues below have been addressed. This can be by either a short narrative or quoting the paragraph number in the report in which it has been covered.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Impact on Crime and Disorder            | Anti social behaviour as a result of boredom will be reduce through the provision of sanctioned play areas  |
| Impact on Sustainability                | None  |
| Impact on Rural Proofing                | By increasing the resources dedicated to enforcement rural proofing is supported  |
| Health and Safety Implications          | Weekly play area inspections to be under taken  |
| Impact on Equality and Diversity Issues | None  |
| Children and Young Persons Implications | Greater provision for play within Borough   |
| Human Rights Act Implications           | None  |
| Section 151 Officer Comments            | The grant funding and associated expenditure will need to be reflected in appropriate budget approvals for 2009/10 and 2010/11. Consideration of classification of capital and revenue expenditure will need to be undertaken to ensure correct accounting. |
| Monitoring Officer Comments             | Legal advice would be to give priority to any safety issues which might be present  |