

WIRRAL COUNCIL

YOUTH & PLAY SERVICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

13 APRIL 2011

SUBJECT:	BIG LOTTERY CHILDREN'S PLAY PROGRAMME REPORT 2011
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	DAVID ARMSTRONG
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	CLLR SHEILA CLARK
KEY DECISION	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the current 'Wirral – Play in the Peninsular' Children's Play BIG Lottery Programme.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS/S

2.1 The Committee is asked to note the report.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

3.1 The report is for information.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 The BIG Lottery Fund awarded Youth & Play Service £881,208 for the children programme over three years from 2009 to 2012. The grant funds a portfolio of seven projects; three revenue and four capital. The three revenue projects are:

- Community Play Rangers – Facilitating and promoting accessible outdoor play for children 5 -13 years (Commissioned to Wirral Play Council)
- Play Practitioners Project - open access play sessions in targeted areas (Commissioned to Wirral Play Council)
- Play For All – inclusive play project (Delivered by the Youth & Play Service)

The four capital projects are for adventure and nature play and the improvement of play areas. These projects, delivered in conjunction with the Parks & Countryside Service, are listed below:

- Meols Park
- Harrison Park, New Brighton
- Port Causeway, Port Sunlight
- Whitfield Common, Heswall

4.2 There are a number of portfolio outcomes expected to be achieved by the end of the grant period. Appendix 1 and 2 describes each outcome in detail.

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 This is the last year of the programme, the finish date being February 2012.
- 5.2 The production of an exit strategy which outlines potential future funding opportunities will assist with mitigating the risk of non-continuation of these projects.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 None.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The projects have all been subject to consultation with relevant agencies and children and young people.

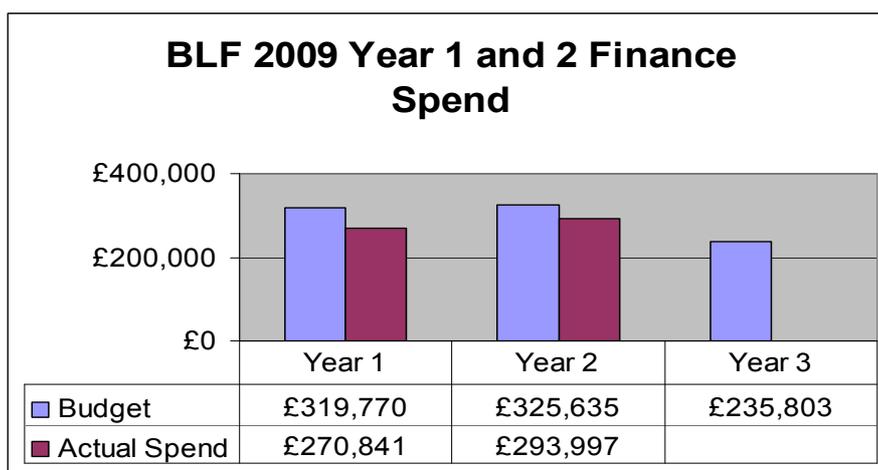
8.0 IMPLCATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 8.1 Wirral Play Council have been commissioned to deliver a majority of these play projects. In addition, a wide range of voluntary, community and faith groups have been involved with this programme.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL: IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

- 9.1 The Children's play BIG Lottery fund financial expenditure for year 1 and 2 are detailed below:

	Budget	Actual Spend to Date	Final Year Budget
Year 1	£ 319,770	£ 270,841	£ 48,929
Year 2	£ 325,635	£ 293,997	£ 31,638
Year 3	£ 235,803		£ 235,803
Total	£ 881,208	£ 564,838	£ 316,370



10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 None

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Wirral's Children's play programme reflects inclusiveness and promotes equal opportunities and access.

11.2 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for the Play Strategy.

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 None.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLCATIONS

13.1 None.

REPORT AUTHORS:

Steve Chan

Acting Deputy Head, Youth and Play Service

Telephone: (0151) 637 6370

Email: stevechan@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICIES

Appendix 1 – Children's Play Programme – Outcomes and Performance

Children's Play Programme - Outcomes

Portfolio outcome: 1

Outcome: *4,700 children and young people able to participate in a range of more inclusive and accessible play experiences in areas of identified need by the end of the three years.*

After two years of delivering the portfolio, the projects are progressing and achieving in excess of the expected outcome. This highlights the projects are high in demand and quality of services are attracting good number of attendance (see Appendix 2). Overall, 4,718 children (unique individuals) have been registered on all projects.

Play projects and capital play area projects consulted widely with children and young people in their ideas for play sessions and their local parks. Where possible, within budget and health & safety parameters, suggestions were met to enrich children's play experiences. This included access to play equipment with an element of risk, invention and cultural diversity. Play Point successfully gained a grant from Aiming Higher for £2,689 to supply each venue with its own Dark Den, equipped with lights and projectors. This enabled children to have chill out areas and create effects with light and explore the darkness.

The Community Play Rangers and PlayPoint projects work closely with the Play For All inclusive play project who provides additional playworker support for children who otherwise would be excluded. This encourages them to socialise with other local children and join in play activities. A number of children have increased in self-confidence and can attend the sessions without additional support. Playworkers build good working relationships with children and their parents/carers which enables them to feel confident about their children attending open access play provision. One child who has been attending an outdoor play session with his wheelchair and has been recently attending winter indoors sessions without his wheelchair. He has the freedom to play in the safe knowledge play staff are on hand whenever he needs them. The Play For All Inclusion project continues to attract referrals from other children agencies and special schools.

All three play projects strategically review their locations identifying where their service is most needed and meet with community requests.

The Play Rangers delivered the outdoors and indoors sessions. From April to October the Play Rangers are based in 30 different parks and play areas geographically covering the most of the Wirral. During the winter months this reduced to 20 play sessions. Playworkers work outside for the first session and then move to an indoors venue due to weather, darkness and safety considerations. The sessions are promoted at school assemblies which encourages children to attend straight after school. The venues are determined by child population, last year's attendance records, availability of local play provision, community requests and findings of health reports. Delivery areas over the last year included:

- Irby Playing Fields, Ridgewood Park - Pensby; Grange and Newton Park - West Kirby; Ryecroft Park; Demesne Street ; Luke Street play area – Seacombe; Central Park-Liscard; Harrison Park; Wallacre play area; Tower Grounds; Vale Park - New Brighton; Prenton Dell Estate; Town Lane and Mayer Park – Bebington; Port Causeway - Brombrough; Victoria Park – Tranmere; Yew Tree play area and Lingham Park – Moreton; Kelsall play area and Torr Park – Eastham; Brookhurst Park and Bromborough recreation ground; Coronation Park – Greasby; Meols Park; Grove Road – Hoylake; Whitfield Common and the Puddydale – Heswall; Noctorum Estate; Wallasey Youth Hub; Moreton Youth Club.

This year the project will be also targeting Spital Field, Duck Pond Lane - Prenton, Wheatland Lane - Seacombe, Grove Road - Wallasey, Birkenhead Park and Ilchester Square.

Playpoint reviews their locations every six months. Currently, play sessions are provided at the following venues, Bebington Youth Club, South Wirral Youth Hub, Eastham, Shaftesbury Youth Hub, Woodchurch Community centre and Overton Community centre. PlayPoint has been liaising with youth hubs and clubs, looking at ways to work together to encourage progression from a play setting to youth provision.

Portfolio outcome: 2

Outcome: *Enable 20 per cent more children and young people to feel safe and reduce the fear of playing beyond the confines of their home environment by the end of the three years.*

The ‘Play Out, Feel Safe’ project was launched in November 2009 to address the main concerns raised by surveyed children when playing out. These include, traffic, bullying, interaction with older youths and strangers. The first survey was carried out in June 2009, with the findings used as a benchmark for the ‘Play Safe Action Plan’.

A similar survey was carried out again in November 2010 with 152 different individuals. The findings were similar to the previous year’s, i.e. fear of being alone, groups of teenagers and gangs, strangers, being in the dark, traffic, busy roads and bullies. Similar Play Safe surveys will be repeated this year and the action plan will be adjusted according to analysed findings.

All concerns raised were addressed in the Play Strategy Implementation plan and positive actions are being taken through working with Wirral Play Partnership members. The project was delivered to nine primary schools to raise awareness of keeping themselves safe, 1,536 children were engaged in focus groups. Children who participated were given safety awareness materials and reflective neon stickers.

Concerns around perceptions of older youths were addressed through combining youth clubs with play sessions to share activities and using young volunteers to support play activities. This has also been achieved through engaging younger children in annual youth events, i.e. Youth Voice Conference and sand sculpture competition. The Youth Service has also attended the annual national Play Day event held in Birkenhead Park. Further projects to provide a bridge for the transitional stage between play and youth provision are also being investigated.

Portfolio outcome: 3

Outcome: *200 more children and young people will be involved in the design, planning and delivery of play provision which will increase satisfaction and meet their play needs by the end of three years.*

Last year in the summer months, 128 children and young people were consulted about satisfaction of their local play areas. The age range of surveyed children and young people was 6 to 17 years old. Overall 15 play areas were monitored. The findings included:

<i>What they like to do in the places they play:</i>	Hang out and be adventurous scored the highest.
<i>Reasons of dislike about their</i>	Much equipment for older young people and equipment

<i>play areas:</i>	is boring and uninspiring. It does not provide enough risk and adventure for older young people.
<i>Ideas for improvement:</i>	The highest score was skate parks, areas for multi-sports, zip wires, big swings and climbing walls.

These findings reflect children and young people's sense of adventure and need to have opportunities to socialise with their peers. The findings have been taken into consideration in designing the next two new sites at Port Causeway and Whitfield Common.

Portfolio Outcome: 4

Outcome: *10,000 children and young people will use new, more challenging and varied equipment by the end of three years.*

Each of the four completed BIG Lottery play areas continues to attract children and young people to experience the new, more challenging play equipment.

Most of the neighbouring schools have been consulted and informed of the improvement to play areas. There were large of number of children using the new play areas during each project visit. From the play area satisfaction survey results, both Lottery fund sites have scored highly in the overall impression of the sites and the amount of have choice available.

Impact

The portfolio is well received in most areas of the borough. The projects have built good relationships with voluntary, community and faith groups and have raised the profile of play in local communities.

The projects have managed to introduce children's play sessions in some communities where previously play provision has not been present. The Play strategy implementation plan targeted the development of local community facilities for play. These included, schools, community centres, church venues, youth hubs and youth clubs. The projects are continuing to identify gaps in provision in areas of most need.

The projects have also successfully engaged with a local primary school to utilise the school grounds for play sessions. This is a first step to explore further potential, to use school grounds as a local play spaces for children.

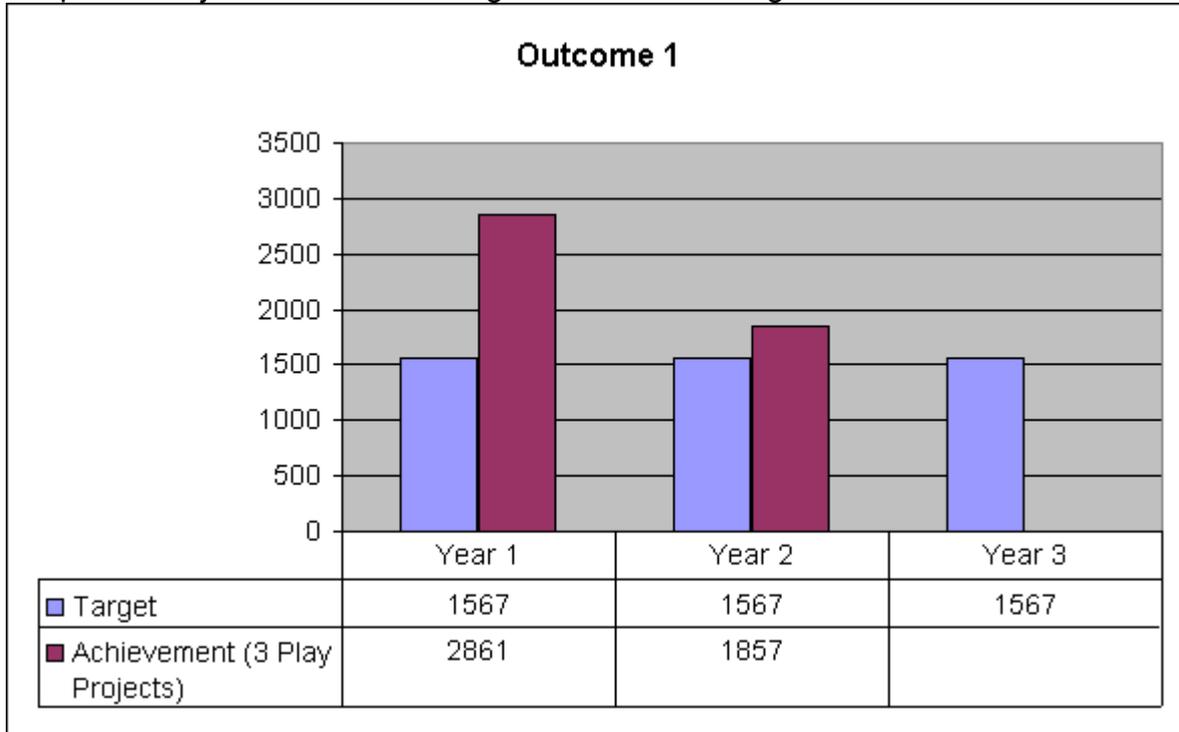
All play and capital projects have achieved more than the expected targets within the set timeframe this year. The projects are continuing to improve their services to enable more children and young people to have an enriched play experience. The programme continues to provide opportunities to explore challenging activities within acceptable levels of risk and consults widely on the delivery of projects and play areas.

Performance

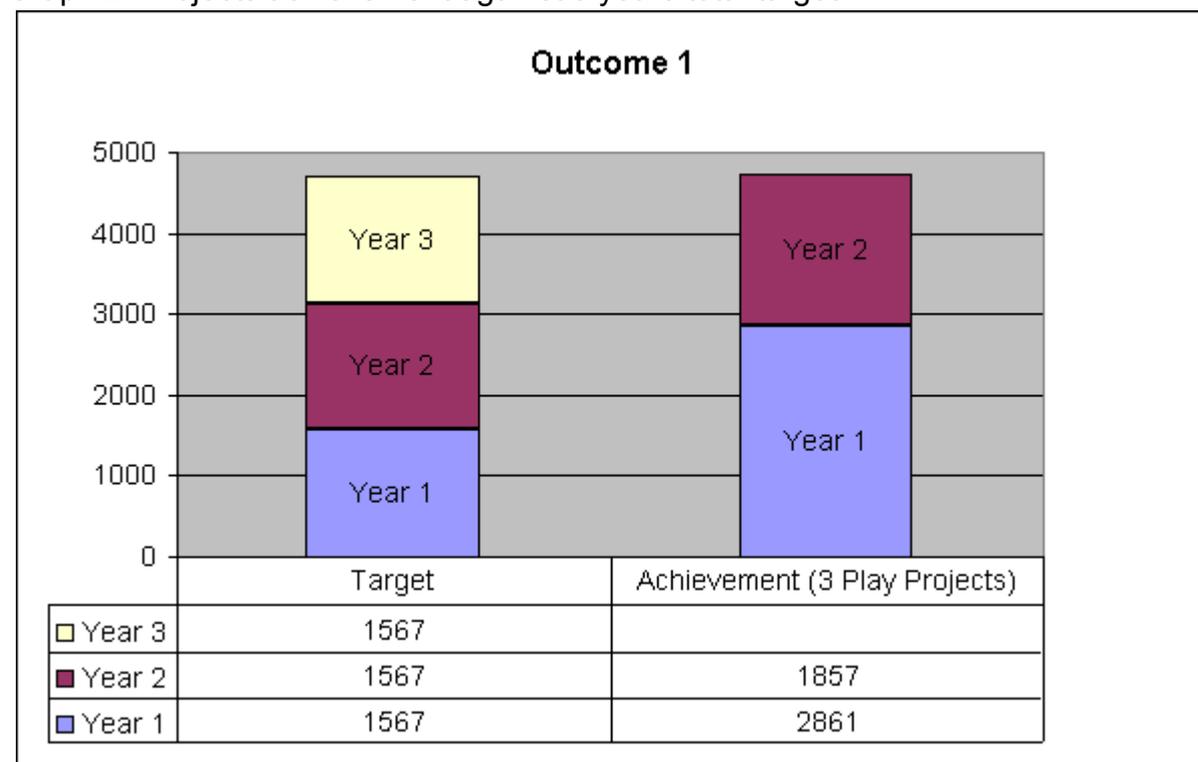
Outcome 1

To reach 4700 children & YP to participate in a range of more inclusive and accessible play experiences in areas of identified need by the end of three years

Graph 1 - Projects achievement against annual average



Graph 2- Projects achievement against 3 years total target



Outcome 2

Enable 20% more children & YP to feel safe and reduce the fear of playing beyond the confines of their home environment by the end of three years

	Target	Survey	Play Out, Feel Safe Campaign delivered
Year 1	313	244	
Year 2	313	152	1536
Year 3	313		
Total	940	396	1536

Outcome 3

200 more children & YP will be involved in the design, planning and delivery of play provision which will increase satisfaction and meet their play needs by the end of three years.

Consultation conducted:

Play area satisfaction survey carried out in Summer 2010. 128 children & Yps participated.

Youth Voice Conference – Annual event held by the Council's Youth service. Attended by over 130 young people to voice their opinions.

11 local school visits – held workshop/ assembly asking their views on the design of their local play areas.

Outcome 4

10,000 children & YP will use new, more challenging and varied equipment by the end of three years.

Number assessed by observed average attendance:

Average attendance per week at each park				20
Average attendance per year				1,040
Average attendance over 3 years				3,120
4 revamped parks by the end of 3 years				12,480