



REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 19TH FEBRUARY 2013

SUBJECT: PLAY SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise members of the new Welsh Government duty requiring Local Authorities to assess the sufficiency of play opportunities for children and for members to note the key findings from the Play Sufficiency Assessment.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report provides an overview of the requirements of the duty and updates on progress made in assessing sufficiency in play opportunities and the matters that have been considered in assessing sufficiency.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Play is an important method in achieving many other strategies and agendas relating to children's education, well being and development. Play contributes to the priority outcomes identified in the Children and Young peoples Plan, the Family First Programme and forms part of the local needs assessment for the Single Integrated Plan.
- 3.2 Play also contributes to Creating an Active Wales and Child Poverty strategy.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Children's right to play is enshrined in Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNRC) "Article 31 Leisure, Play and Culture which states that Children have the right to relax, play and to join in a wide range of cultural, artistic and other recreational activities".
- 4.2 The Welsh Government is commencing the first part of the duty under section 11 of the children and families (Wales) measure 2010, play opportunities for children. The duty requires Local Authorities to assess the sufficiency of play opportunities for children in this area.
- 4.3 Wales is the first country in the world to establish such a duty within its legislative framework, so there are no precedents for this work.
- 4.4 Welsh Ministers have decided to commence the duty in two parts. The first part will cover the duty on Local Authorities to assess for sufficient play opportunities and commenced in November 2012.

- 4.5 In the future the second part of the duty will be placed on Local Authorities to secure sufficient play opportunities, so far as reasonably practicable. This part will commence after full consideration has been given to the assessment.
- 4.6 "Creating a Play Friendly Wales" the statutory guidance on assessing sufficient play opportunities for children states that what is considered as sufficient and achievable will depend upon a number of variables and should be determined locally.
- 4.7 Matters that are needed to be taken into account when carrying out the Play Sufficiency Assessments include: - population, provision for diverse needs, space available, charges, community engagement, supervised provision, access, play workforce and policy.
- 4.8 The purpose of the Assessment is to establish a baseline of provision as well as identify gaps in information, provision and service delivery and policy implementation. A summary of key findings from the work carried out to date is included as Appendix 1.
- 4.9 Officers in Planning have played a key role in the collation of significant levels of information required for the assessment. Representatives from all relevant stakeholders, both from within CCBC and within partner organisations have contributed through a working group. The terms of reference for this group set out the mandate to identify and provide background evidence and information to support the audit, establish local standards and agree the content of the final Play Sufficiency Assessment Action Plan.
- 4.10 As well as the engagement of all key partners, Officers have sought to consult as many children and young people as well as their parents, families and other interested parties as possible within the limited timescales available.
- 4.11 Although the overall lead has been taken by the Sport and Leisure Services Manager to ensure that the assessment has been completed and submitted in accordance with Welsh Government timescales, further consideration needs to be given in relation to the future delivery of the action plan given the role that supervised play and the play workforce has in the delivery of the action plan.
- 4.12 The proposed principle statement for Play Sufficiency is:-
- "We recognise that every child has the right to play and access quality play opportunities. We also acknowledge that play is a fundamental part of childhood and benefits children's health, social and emotional well being. We will continue to develop opportunities that support children's play and work towards creating an environment that values it".
- 4.13 A draft Sufficiency Assessment and action plan are required to be submitted to the Welsh Government by 1st March 2013. Although timescales have been tight a collaborative, multi agency approach has ensured that the necessary level of progress has been made. A copy of the full Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan was placed on the Member Portal on 13th February 2013 and is also available in the Members Library at Penallta House.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Play Sufficiency Assessment will consider the diverse needs of our communities and an impact assessment will be undertaken at the time of proceeding with the action plan.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 While a small grant has been received to support the development of the Sufficiency Assessment it is expected that assessments will be required to be submitted every 3 years. Funding for future Play Sufficiency Assessments and delivery of resultant action plans will be considered by Welsh Government in due course.

6.2 It is expected that the Action Plan should include indicative budget requirements for achieving play sufficiency. This is currently unknown and needs to be carefully handled to manage expectations. Where costs are known, the action plan includes indicative costs for achieving play sufficiency over the next three years. However, many of the actions are dependent on successfully securing external funding.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no significant personnel implication associated with the proposal at present.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 Extensive consultation has and will continue to be carried out with Children and Young people, Parent Network, CYP Board, GAVO, Community 1st and through the working group.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Members are asked to note the progress made in meeting the Welsh Government requirements in completing the Play Sufficiency Assessments and acknowledge the key findings that will contribute towards the draft action plan to be submitted to Welsh Government on 1st March 2013.

10. CONSULTEES

10.1 The report reflects the views of the listed consultees.

Author: David Phenis, Acting Sport and Leisure Services Manager
e-mail: phenidh@caerphilly.gov.uk
Telephone: 01495 235496

Consultees: Anthony O'Sullivan, Chief Executive
Mark S. Williams, Head of Community and Leisure Services
Councillor David Poole, Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services
Victoria Morgan, Senior Planning Officer

Background Papers:
Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan

Appendices:
Appendix 1 Summary of Key Findings from Play Sufficiency Assessment