

# Report

**Subject** : Play Strategy  
**Report to** : Cabinet  
**Date** : Wednesday 11 July 2007  
**Author** : Amber Skyring, Principal Community Development Officer  
**Cabinet Member for Community Initiatives** : Councillor Dalton

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**1. Introduction:**

- 1.1. To seek cabinet's approval of the Play Strategy that will potentially unlock £208,000 of Big Lottery funding, ring fenced for Salisbury District Council for improving and promoting play opportunities within the Salisbury District area.

**2. Background:**

- In March 2006, a fund of £155m became available nationally through a partnership of the Children's Play Strategy and the Big Lottery in response to the Government's 2004 play review 'Getting Serious About Play'.
- 2.1. To access this money an adopted Play Strategy is required, setting out current and future play provision requirements in the district along with an Action Plan identifying projects. Each local authority area has been allocated ring-fenced funds by the Lottery, based on the child population and the levels of deprivation. Salisbury District Council's allocation is £208,000.
  - 2.2. Wiltshire County Council took the lead on the drafting of a countywide Play Strategy with input from all 4 District Councils. However, each local authority then had to produce their own strategy that reflected local issues and aspirations as a result of local audits and consultation. Both the district council strategy and that of the county enable a wide variety of play opportunities to be included.
  - 2.3. Each District Council will make applications to the BIG Lottery separately.
  - 2.4. The Principal Community Development officer in conjunction with external play providers will develop a funding application that supports the policy objectives and contributes to actions noted in the Play Strategy.

**3. Current Position:**

- 3.1. Due to the short timescales internal officers have not yet commented on the draft and as a result there may be some minor amendments made to the final draft.
- 3.2. Some of the main components of the Play Strategy are as follows:
  - 3.2.1 Key Policy Statements - The Strategy links to the Government's agenda, Every Child Counts, as well as the Children's Act 2004. These policies have been distilled into the themes of Being Healthy, Staying Safe, Enjoying and Achieving, Making a Positive Contribution, and Economic Well-being.
  - 3.2.2 The Case for Play - This section looks at the benefits of play not just for children but also parents, carers and the community as a whole. It also looks at the barriers to play as well as the changing attitude towards risk associated with play.
  - 3.2.3 Play Provision - An analysis of the current provision is detailed, along with providers and enabling mechanisms such as the Council's own community grant schemes



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3.2.4 Analysis - An analysis of the current provision and the results of various public consultations has been made which allows the setting of the approach to be taken to improve provision. From this an Action Plan has been drawn up which is aligned to the themes set out in the key policy statements in 3.2.1 above, a draft copy of which is available in the members room.

4. The Way Forward:

- 4.1. The Play Strategy has been widely consulted on externally for a minimum of 8 weeks (as set out in the Wiltshire Compact) including a special consultation workshop held with key stakeholders and experts in the field.
- 4.2. Once adopted the Strategy will support any application to the BIG Lottery for funding for projects. Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their applications within three months of the 10th September 2007 deadline.
- 4.3. The Wiltshire Play Partnership was launched on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2007. Salisbury District will be a partner on the Wiltshire Play Partnership which aims to:
  - 4.3.1 Raise the profile of play across Wiltshire and within member organisations
  - 4.3.2 Involve children and young people in decisions that affect their lives in the county
  - 4.3.3 Increase awareness of how important play and free time activities are to children, young people and their communities
  - 4.3.4 Bring together main stakeholders with an interest and/or direct role to play across Wiltshire to work on common issues
  - 4.3.5 Promote positive attitudes to play and reduce the barriers that prevent children and young people from taking part in play
  - 4.3.6 Work in partnership with local groups, voluntary organisations and statutory agencies to enable to provision of play and free time activities that meet the needs of children and young people in the county
  - 4.3.7 Act as a forum / Steering Group for appropriate play development work in Wiltshire County Council
  - 4.3.8 Enhance children and young people's well being

5. **Recommendations:** - The Cabinet is recommended to:

- 5.1. Approve the Play Strategy as it currently stands.
- 5.2. Nominate a Play Champion for Salisbury District Council who will subsequently act as the representative member on the Wiltshire Play Partnership.
- 5.3. Agree that the Portfolio Holder for Community & Housing and the Head of Community Initiatives have delegated authority to agree any outstanding matters and revisions.

6. **Implications:**

- 6.1. Financial: If successful the application will release £208,342 from the Big Lottery. (An element of 10% of this can be allocated towards management costs). The BIG Lottery does not expect local authorities to raise partnership funding. However, where further money is required for capital projects any additional funding required will be identified before the application is submitted. Over the life of the Strategy, there may be additional resources required to realise its aims. Obtaining external funding, re-prioritising existing resources, or submitting a bid as part of the annual budget process will address these.
- 6.2. Legal: None at this stage
- 6.3. Personnel: SDC does not have a specifically trained Play Development Officers and the strategy currently is dependant on existing personnel and increasing their knowledge and understanding on delivery schemes that support this strategy.
- 6.4. Community Safety: None at this stage
- 6.5. Environmental: None at this stage
- 6.6. Human Rights: None at this stage
- 6.7. Equality and Diversity: An Equality Impact Assessment needs to be undertaken on both the Strategy and Lottery application. Due to the very tight time frame this has not yet been undertaken. The Strategy incorporates inclusive measures that would improve access to play provision for all children and young people in the district
- 6.8. Risk Analysis: With regard to the Play Strategy, there is no guarantee of success with the Big Lottery and more officer time will be required to see the bid through to the submission stage. Where projects are dependant on Lottery funding none of the proposed projects would be initiated before confirmation of grant is secured. If successful then there will be resource implications for the successful delivery of projects
- 6.9. Ward(s) Affected: Potentially all within the SDC area.

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