

PLEASE NOTE VENUE

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



21 January 2008

at 4.30 pm

at Owton Manor Community Centre,
Wynyard Road, Hartlepool

MEMBERS: CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:

Councillors S Cook, Coward, Fleet, Griffin, A E Lilley, London, Plant, Preece, Shaw, Simmons and Worthy

Co-opted Members: Elizabeth Barraclough and David Relton

Leigh Bradley, Jonathan Simpson, Chris Lund, Kelly Goulding, Cassie Jeffries and Gillian Pounder

Resident Representatives: John Cambridge, Evelyn Leck and Michael Ward

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2. **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

3. **MINUTES**

3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 7 January 2008 (*to follow*)

4. **SHORT ICE BREAKER EXERCISE**

5. **RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM**

None

PLEASE NOTE VENUE

6. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED VIA SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

None

7. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS / BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS

None

8. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Scrutiny Investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool'

8.1 Evidence from Hartlepool Footlights:-

(a) Covering Report - *Scrutiny Support Officer*; and

(b) Presentation by Support Workers and Users of the Hartlepool Footlights group.

8.2 A Regional Perspective on the Provision of Recreation Activities and Free Play:-

(a) Covering Report - *Scrutiny Support Officer*; and

(b) Presentation by *Play England North East*.

8.3 A Police Perspective on the Impact of Recreation Activities in Hartlepool on Crime And Disorder:-

(a) Covering Report - *Scrutiny Support Officer*; and

(b) Presentation by Inspector Peter Knights, Cleveland Police.

8.4 How 'Free Play' is Provided in Hartlepool:-

(a) Covering Report - *Scrutiny Support Officer*; and

(b) Presentations by the Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator and Parks and Countryside Manager

PLEASE NOTE VENUE

- 8.5 Evidence Gathering – Feedback from Site Visit to Free Play Sites in Middlesbrough:-
- (a) Covering Report (*Scrutiny Support Officer*); and
 - (b) Verbal feedback / findings from Members of the Forum in attendance at the Site Visits.

9. **ISSUES IDENTIFIED FROM FORWARD PLAN**

10. **ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT**

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Date of Next Meeting:- 4 February 2008, commencing at 4.30 pm in the Conference Room, Belle Vue Community, Sports and Youth Centre, Kendal Road, Hartlepool

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

21 January 2008



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: ACCESS TO RECREATION ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN HARTLEPOOL - EVIDENCE FROM HARTLEPOOL FOOTLIGHTS – COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform Members of the Forum that representatives from Hartlepool Footlights have been invited to attend this meeting to provide evidence in relation to the ongoing investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool'.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Members will recall that the Forum, at its meeting on the 16 July 2007, approved the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry/Sources of Evidence for its investigation into access to recreation activities for children and young people in Hartlepool. The categories of recreation activities to be explored during the investigation were further defined by the Forum on the 1 October 2007 as being:-

- (i) Organised activities (e.g. Scouts and Guides, etc.);
- (ii) Free play (e.g. meeting friends); and
- (iii) Other Interests (e.g. stamp collecting, politics, craft/model making).

2.2 As part of its investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool' the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum is keen to hear the views of support worker and service users of groups that provide recreation activities for children / young people. To assist in obtaining these views Hartlepool Footlights have been invited to attend this meeting to provide evidence on:-

- (i) The services / activities they provide and who they are aimed at;
- (ii) Who takes advantage of the services / activities;
- (iii) What the future holds for the group;

- (iv) What their service users feel are the barriers to accessing your services / activities;
- (v) What has been done to make their services / activities more accessible?

2.3 During this evidence gathering session it is suggested that responses should be sought to the following key questions:-

- (a) What are your views on the level, and standard, of provision of recreation activities for children and young people in Hartlepool?
- (b) What would you like to see done to improve the provision of organised recreation services / activities in Hartlepool?
- (c) What are your views in relation to the provision of 'Free Play', including its benefits and any possible disadvantages?
- (d) Do you have any other views / information, which you feel, may be useful to Members in forming their recommendations to Cabinet?

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 That Members note the presentation and consider the information provided during the formulation of the Forums final report.

Contact Officers:- Joan Wilkins – Scrutiny Support Officer
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523339
Email: joan.wilkins@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in the preparation of this report:-

- (i) Scoping Report – Access to Recreation Facilities for Young People in Hartlepool (Children's Services Scrutiny Forum – 16 July 2007);
- (ii) Setting the Scene Report – Access to Recreation Facilities for Young People in Hartlepool (Children's Services Scrutiny Forum – 20 August 2007); and
- (iii) Results of Existing Consultations and Research - Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool (Children's Services Scrutiny Forum – 1 October 2007).

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

21 January 2008



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: A REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE PROVISION OF RECREATION ACTIVITIES AND FREE PLAY - COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Forum of a presentation to be given by a representative from Play England North East to provide evidence in relation to the ongoing investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool'.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that the Forum, at its meeting on the 16 July 2007, approved the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry / Sources of Evidence for its investigation into access to recreation activities for children and young people in Hartlepool. The categories of recreation activities to be explored during the investigation were further defined by the Forum on the 1 October 2007 as being:-

- (i) Organised activities (e.g. Scouts and Guides, etc.);
- (ii) Free play (e.g. meeting friends); and
- (iii) Other Interests (e.g. stamp collecting, politics, craft/model making).

- 2.2 As part of its investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool', the focus of today's meeting is to be the issue of 'Free Play'. To assist in providing Members with appropriate information, a presentation is to be given by Kirsty Thomson from Play England North East, providing a regional perspective on the provision of recreation activities, including 'Free Play'.

- 2.3 During this evidence gathering session it is suggested that responses should be sought to the following key questions:-

- (a) What are your views on the level, and standard, of provision of recreation activities for children and young people regionally and in particular in Hartlepool?
- (b) How are recreational activities provided on a regional basis and how effective are they at meeting the needs of children and young people?
- (c) What do you feel are the regional barriers to accessing recreation services / activities?
- (d) What do you feel could be done to improve the provision of recreation activities / facilities, including 'Free Play' activities / facilities in Hartlepool?
- (e) Do you have any other views / information, which you feel, may be useful to Members in forming their recommendations to Cabinet?
- (f) What, if any, have been the advantages and disadvantages of the provision of 'Free Play'?
- (g) What role do you feel 'Free Play' should play in the provision of recreation activities / facilities?
- (h) Do you have any other views / information, which you feel, may be useful to Members in forming their recommendations to Cabinet?

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

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**CHILDREN'S SERVICES
SCRUTINY FORUM**

21 January 2008



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: A POLICE PERSPECTIVE ON THE IMPACT OF RECREATION ACTIVITIES IN HARTLEPOOL ON CRIME AND DISORDER - COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform Members of the Forum of a presentation to be given by Inspector Peter Knights, Cleveland Police, to provide evidence in relation to the ongoing investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool'.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Members will recall that the Forum, at its meeting on the 16 July 2007, approved the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry / Sources of Evidence for its investigation into access to recreation activities for children and young people in Hartlepool. The categories of recreation activities to be explored during the investigation were further defined by the Forum on the 1 October 2007 as being:-

- (i) Organised activities (e.g. Scouts and Guides, etc.);
- (ii) Free play (e.g. meeting friends); and
- (iii) Other Interests (e.g. stamp collecting, politics, craft/model making).

2.2 As part of its investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool', the focus of today's meeting is to be the issue of 'Free Play'. To assist in providing Members with appropriate information a presentation is to be given by Inspector Peter Knights, Cleveland Police, providing a police perspective in relation to:-

- (i) The impact of the provision of recreation activities, including 'Free Play', and the possible use of Pod's, on the prevention of crime and disorder issues in the town; and

(ii) What further could be done through recreation activities to assist in reducing crime and disorder issues in Hartlepool.

2.2 During this evidence gathering session it is suggested that responses should be sought to the following key questions:-

(a) What is the Hartlepool Police perception of the main advantages and disadvantage of the provision of 'Free Play' in Hartlepool, including the use of pods and youth shelters?;

(b) What do you feel could be done to improve the provision of recreation activities / facilities, including 'Free Play' activities / facilities in Hartlepool?; and

(c) Do you have any other views / information, which you feel, may be useful to Members in forming their recommendations to Cabinet?

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 That Members note the presentation and consider the information provided during the formulation of the Forums final report.

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**CHILDREN'S SERVICES
SCRUTINY FORUM**

21 January 2008



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: HOW 'FREE PLAY' IS PROVIDED IN HARTLEPOOL
– COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform Members of the Forum of presentations to be given by the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator and Parks and Countryside Manager to provide evidence in relation to the ongoing investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool'.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Members will recall that the Forum, at its meeting on the 16 July 2007, approved the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry/Sources of Evidence for its investigation into access to recreation activities for children and young people in Hartlepool. The categories of recreation activities to be explored during the investigation were further defined by the Forum on the 1 October 2007 as being:-

- (i) Organised activities (e.g. Scouts and Guides, etc.);
- (ii) Free play (e.g. meeting friends); and
- (iii) Other Interests (e.g. stamp collecting, politics, craft/model making).

2.2 As part of its investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool', the focus of today's meeting is to be the issue of 'Free Play'. To assist in providing Members with the appropriate information presentations are to be given by the Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator and Parks and Countryside Manager to clarify how 'Free Play' is provided in Hartlepool.

2.3 During this evidence gathering session it is suggested that responses should be sought to the following key questions:-

- (a) How has 'Free Play' been provided in Hartlepool in the past and what role will it play in the provision of recreation facilities for young people in the future?;
- (b) How effective has the provision of 'Free Play' been in meeting young peoples needs in Hartlepool?;
- (c) What, if any, have been the advantages and disadvantages of the provision of 'Free Play?;
- (d) What could be done to improve the provision of 'Free Play' activities / facilities in Hartlepool?; and
- (e) Do you have any other views / information, which you feel, may be useful to Members in forming their recommendations to Cabinet?

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members note the presentation and consider the information provided during the formulation of the Forums final report.

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

21 January 2008



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: EVIDENCE GATHERING - ACCESS TO RECREATION ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN HARTLEPOOL – FEEDBACK FROM SITE VISITS TO FREE PLAY SITES IN MIDDLESBROUGH

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To facilitate a discussion amongst Members of this Forum in relation to the site visits undertaken to 'Free Play' sites provided by Middlesbrough Borough Council, with the aim of observing best practice and comparing the activities / strategies undertaken and their effectiveness.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of this Forum on 17 July 2006, the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry/Sources of Evidence were approved by the Forum for this scrutiny investigation.
- 2.2 In accordance with the approved timetable a site visit was undertaken on the 14 January 2008 to observe a number of Free Play sites / activities provided by Middlesbrough Borough Council. A short session was also held with relevant officers from Middlesbrough BC to discuss the sites and issues affecting them, together with the wider issue of best practice in Middlesbrough for the provision of recreation activities. Sites / activities observed during the course of the visit were:-
- (i) Prissick Plaza Skate Park;
 - (ii) Easterside 'Pod'; and
 - (iii) Albert Park 'Youth Shelter'.

- 2.3 During the course of the visit Members present received a wide range of information. A summary of the information provided and the issues discussed is outlined in **Appendix A** which will be circulated to Members shortly.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That Members of the Forum discuss their findings from the site visit held on the 14 January 2008.

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