

# PLEASE NOTE VENUE

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



**Monday, 4 February 2008**

**at 4.30 pm**

**in the Belle Vue Community, Sports and Youth Centre,  
Kendal 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 21 January 2008 *(to follow)*
4. **SHORTICE BREAKER EXERCISE**
5. **RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM**

No items.

# PLEASE NOTE VENUE

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

No items.

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

No items.

8. **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

**Scrutiny Investigation into 'Sustainability of Externally Funded Community Initiatives in Schools'**

8.1 Evidence from Independent Sports Consultant

(a) Covering Report – *Scrutiny Support Officer*, and

(b) Report from Independent Sports Consultant – Mr D.H. Dunlop

8.2 Evidence from the Children's Services Portfolio Holder:-

(a) Covering Report – *Scrutiny Support Officer*, and

(b) Verbal evidence from the Children's Services Portfolio Holder.

8.3 Evidence from Schools where Externally Funded Community Initiatives are located.

(a) Covering Report – *Scrutiny Support Officer*, and

(b) Verbal evidence from Head Teachers / Individuals Responsible for Project Delivery.

9. **ISSUES IDENTIFIED FROM FORWARD PLAN**

No items.

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

**ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**i) Date of Next Meeting 25 February 2008 commencing at 4.30 pm in Council Chamber, Civic Centre**

# CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

## MINUTES

21 January 2008

The meeting commenced at 4.30pm in Owton Manor Community Centre,  
Wynyard Road, Hartlepool

### **Present:**

Councillor: Alison Lilley (In the Chair)

Councillors: Shaun Cook, Mary Fleet, Sheila Griffin, Frances London, Michelle Plant, Christopher Simmons and Gladys Worthy.

Co-opted Member: Elizabeth Barraclough

Young People Representatives: Leigh Bradley, Hannah Shaw and Gillian Pounder.

Resident Representatives: John Cambridge

Officers: John Robinson, Children's Fund Manager  
Tracy Liveras, Young People and Play Co-ordinator  
Les Nevin, Access Officer  
Sally Forth, Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator  
Andrew Pearson, Parks and Countryside Manager  
Joan Wilkins, Scrutiny Support Officer  
Angela Hunter, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Also Present: Inspector Peter Knights, Cleveland Police  
Beth Hawkridge, Barnardos

### **68. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jane Shaw, resident representatives Evelyn Leck and Michael Ward and young people representatives Kelly Goulding and Chris Lund.

### **69. Declarations of interest by Members**

None.

**70. Minutes of the meeting held on 7 January 2008**

Confirmed.

**71. Short Ice Breaker Exercise**

A young person representative facilitated a five minute ice breaker session which included all attendees of the Forum.

**72. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum**

None.

**73. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee**

None.

**74. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents**

None.

**75. Scrutiny Investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool' – Evidence from Hartlepool Footlights**  
*(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

Members were informed that representatives from Hartlepool Footlights had been invited to attend this meeting to provide evidence in relation to the ongoing investigation. However, due to unforeseen circumstances no representatives had been able to attend.

**76. Scrutiny Investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool' – A Regional Perspective on the Provision of Recreation Activities**  
*(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer introduced the Regional Development Officer (RDO) from Play England North East who had been invited to provide evidence in relation to the on-going investigation. A presentation was given to Members which included the three key challenges to providing play for

children and they were:

- Free at point of access
- Free to come and go
- Free to what children want when they're there

The Forum learned that for every acre of land in England given over to public playgrounds, over 80 acres was given over to golf. It was also highlighted that:-

- (i) In a single generation, the 'home habitat' of a typical 8 year old (i.e. the area that a child can travel around on their own.) had shrunk to one-ninth of its original size; and
- (ii) On average, there is 2.3 sq m of play space for each child under 12 in the UK (about the size of a kitchen table).

It was noted that 23 local authorities had play strategies in place and 21, including Hartlepool Borough Council, had been successful with bids to the BIG lottery for funding. The importance of ensuring young people were involved from the early stages of any planning of play development to encourage ownership of the development was discussed.

A discussion ensued in which the following issues were raised:

- Members were asked to consider the types of play they participated in as children / young people. The resulting selection of activities both highlighted the historical importance of importance of free play and the types of things children / young people were no longer able to do as a result of personal safety concerns.
- How would this play provision be facilitated? The RDO acknowledged that there were 'stranger danger' issues to be considered, but added that the provision would include supervision by appropriately checked personnel (Play Rangers) and would be provided on a local level within the community to encourage community cohesion and ownership.
- In response to concerns expressed regarding the accessibility of play areas for children and young people with disabilities the RDO indicated that Play England were looking to explore this in more detail. Whilst few examples of good practice from elsewhere had been identified work was ongoing to identify a way forward and Members were asked to note that funding for inclusion improvements was to be provided through the Children's Plan. It was also noted that Hartlepool's draft Open Space Strategy included provision for the upgrading of play facilities/areas for children with disabilities to ensure inclusion for all children. An important element of this strategy was also the involvement of young people in the development of new, or upgrading of existing, play facilities / activities.
- Had consideration been given to the impact of different age groups playing in the same area? The RDO commented that the provision of any play equipment/area would need to take this into account and consideration would be given to the possible division by age groups for

some facilities/activities.

- Clarification was sought on how the balance of safety and risk would be managed? The RDO indicated that this was down to the provision of an environment with an element of supervision where parents and children were comfortable with the element of risk. All play areas/equipment were subject to statutory health and safety risk assessments.
- Members were concerned that parents were more protective of their children due to the high profile cases of injury/harm involving children in the press. The Children's Fund Manager indicated that a Parenting Strategy was being prepared by the Children's Services Department which acknowledged the need to support parents to deal with these kind of issues and make informed decisions.
- What were the implications of Play Rangers in Hartlepool? The Children's Play Co-ordinator indicated that the provision of Play Rangers was based on deprivation and the Play Partnership decided to use the money by examining any gaps in provision and what children and young people want through extensive consultation. In Hartlepool, eight projects had been developed, 6 by the voluntary sector and 2 by the local authority. All the projects were free and some included transport provision. Members were informed that the Play Strategy was developed with other agencies to provide a better place for children to play and grow up in.
- Clarification was sought on the criteria to qualify for free transport? The Children's Play Co-ordinator indicated that the criteria applied to facilities provided in areas where there was no local bus provision, for example Summerhill. Members were advised that the local authority was working closely with voluntary agencies to provide free transport of this type and queried if there was a register of available vehicles.
- Had the Play Access Strategy been developed with inclusion in mind? The Children's Play Co-ordinator indicated that the Play Strategy had been developed with an element of inclusion as part of the action plan. The local authority was currently working with voluntary groups to ensure that children with disabilities were not segregated in any way.
- Members noted that there was a lot of work to be done, not specifically in making children safer but in making parents feel that their children are safe in the facilities /activities provided.

The Regional Development Officer from Play England was thanked for her informative presentation and for answering Members' questions.

## **Recommendation**

That the presentation and ensuing discussion be noted.

## **77. Scrutiny Investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool' – A Police Perspective on the Impact of Recreation Activities in Hartlepool on Crime and Disorder** *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer introduced Inspector Peter Knights of Cleveland Police who had been invited to provide evidence in relation to the ongoing investigation. The Inspector gave a presentation to Members which highlighted what should be taken into consideration when examining play facilities. These were the location of the facilities, including accessibility; whether a quick makeover and an existing facility would meet expectations; whether the facility was what young people wanted and how to manage the worry of risk against wanting children to play.

The Inspector had identified a number of potential positive outcomes from the creation of a play area including the provision of communal activities, complying with the whole 'neighbourhood' agenda, parents knowing where their children were and opportunities for communities to engage and drive forward the citizenship agenda. However, there were also some not so positive elements identified. These included the prospect of an increase in anti-social behaviour in uncontrolled environments, fear or control in controlled environments, the provision of youth shelters was not a substitute for providing activities and concern with the sustainability of any activity.

It was recognised that the key issues identified were to provide activities sometimes, whilst providing facilities at other times and ensuring that any activities/facilities were interesting and innovative.

A discussion ensued in which the following issues were raised:

- Does the current judicial system allow young people to get away with some softer crimes? The Inspector responded that the key was to re-introduce parental respect, for example, knowing where your child was on a night. The Police were governed by rules and regulations but did generally find the judicial system supportive.
- The provision of sporting activities such as basketball had been mentioned during the presentation, did Hartlepool have the facilities to accommodate this? The Children's Fund Manager indicated that basketball classes had been facilitated at Dyke House School under the guidance of the Newcastle basketball team. However this had proven difficult to sustain due to lack of parental support. The Parks and Countryside Manager added that there were two successful basketball clubs operating in Hartlepool which would provide a pathway for young people to continue with sport if they so wished.
- A Member had had difficulties obtaining a list of incidents of anti-social behaviour reported in her Ward. The Inspector would speak to the

Member after the meeting and ensure that the relevant information was forwarded directly.

Inspector Knights was thanked for his informative presentation and for answering Members' questions.

### **Recommendation**

That the presentation and ensuing discussion be noted.

## **78. Scrutiny Investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool' – How 'Free' Play is Provided in Hartlepool** *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer introduced the Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator and the Parks and Countryside Manager to provide evidence in relation to the ongoing investigation.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator gave a presentation which examined the aspect of alcohol impacted anti-social behaviour, although this was not felt was a key issue to anti-social behaviour and the impact anti-social behaviour had on other people.

A discussion ensued in which the following issues were raised.

- Was there any research to show how inclusion could help reduce anti-social behaviour? The Children's Play Co-ordinator responded that research had proven that children did not recognise differentiation between children with or without disabilities, but that it was more about the adults' fear. Elements of good practice needed to be examined to demonstrate to parents how integration benefits the children.
- Members were asked to note that the fear of crime within communities needed to be overcome and Members support would play an instrumental part in this.
- Members felt that the way children played had not changed that dramatically but was influenced by how society had changed for example, availability of alcohol. Members felt it was important to ensure that adequate funding was available for the provision of play facilities and that they needed to work with officers to identify areas within their own wards where this could be located.

The Parks and Countryside Manager presented a report which identified that play provision generally was seen as having open access where children could come and go as they pleased. A study carried out by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation indicated that only 12% of outdoor play by children occurred in equipped play areas. Other studies had also found that it was more likely that children would play out in the street or pavements rather than in local green spaces. As part of the preparation of the draft Open Spaces



Assessment consultation had been undertaken and the findings of this were detailed in the report.

An audit of provision had been undertaken and examined two key areas: equipped children's play spaces for up to age 12 and the provision for teenagers such as skateboard parks and open access to MUGAs.

A Member raised the issue of anti-social behaviour which occurred in the Oxford Road play area where youths congregated and caused a lot of problems for Brooke estate residents. The Parks and Countryside Manager indicated that on paper this was a good location for this kind of facility, however, this was dependent on how it was used and managed. This facility was one of the older facilities in the town and the key would be to work with the local community/young people to ensure that the right provision was provided in this area.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator and Parks and Countryside Manager were thanked for their informative presentations and for answering Members' questions.

### **Recommendation**

That the presentation and ensuing discussion be noted.

## **79. Scrutiny Investigation into 'Access to Recreation Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool' – Evidence Gathering – Feedback from Site Visit to Free Play Sites in Middlesbrough** *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

As part of the scrutiny investigation, Members had been invited to undertake visits to four parks with the provision of free play sites in Middlesbrough. The Scrutiny Support Officer distributed to Members a report which highlighted the issues raised during these visits. The majority of the issues raised from the visits had been raised earlier in the meeting under other items on the agenda. Members were particularly complementary about the provision of a youth shelter at Pallister Park, noting that the POD was far enough away from houses not to cause a problem and PCSOs passed the area regularly as part of their routine beat. Members were also impressed with the POD at Easterside and felt that it was well received by the community as they had been involved in this project from the early planning stages.

Members were informed that the young people representatives on the Forum had asked if they could visit the parks and speak to the young people to gain their views on the PODs and youth shelters. This information would be reported back to a future meeting of the Forum.

### **Recommendation**

That the feedback from Members be noted.

JANE SHAW

CHAIRMAN

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES  
SCRUTINY FORUM**

4 February 2008



**Report of:** Scrutiny Support Officer

**Subject** SUSTAINABILITY OF EXTERNALLY FUNDED  
COMMUNITY INITIATIVES IN SCHOOLS –  
EVIDENCE FROM INDEPENDENT SPORTS  
CONSULTANT – COVERING REPORT

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To introduce the independent consultants report, commissioned by the Forum, to inform its investigation into the sustainability of externally funded community initiatives in Hartlepool schools.
- 1.2 To seek the formulation of recommendations on this issue for inclusion in the Forum's final report to Cabinet.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 Members will recall that the Forum, at its meeting on the 5 November 2007, approved the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry/Sources of Evidence for its investigation into the sustainability of externally funded community initiatives in Hartlepool schools.
- 2.2 As part of this investigation the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum obtained approval for funding, from the dedicated Overview and Scrutiny Budget, for the appointment of an independent / external witness to enable completion of the investigation within a very tight timescale (one meeting only) and provide advice and information on this issue.
- 2.3 With experience of working with Sport England and the locality itself, an Independent Sports Consultant was appointed to undertake a piece of work in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the investigation agreed by the Forum, as outlined below :-

- (i) To gain an understanding of the role of the local authority in relation to sustaining externally funded community initiatives in schools;
- (ii) To gain an understanding of the role of schools in relation to sustaining externally funded community initiatives in schools;
- (iii) To consider, what good practice / guidance, if any, exists for sustaining externally funded community initiatives;
- (iv) To explore the role of Sport England and other agencies as funding bodies for community initiatives in schools;
- (v) To consider how the Authority's community leadership role should be interpreted in terms of the sustainability of community initiatives in schools; and
- (vi) To identify suggestions for improvement / future management processes geared to enhancing the sustainability of community funded initiatives, in schools.

2.4 This piece of work has now been completed and its results are outlined in the report provide at item 8.1(b) for the Forums consideration. During consideration of this report it is suggested that responses should be sought to the following key questions:-

- (a) What do you feel are the major issues affecting the sustainability of externally funded community initiatives in Hartlepool schools when initial capital investment comes to an end?
- (b) What problems, if any, are experienced sustaining externally funded community initiatives in schools when initial capital investment comes to an end?
- (c) How could the provision of externally funded community initiatives in schools in Hartlepool be made more sustainable in the future?
- (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 report and consider the Consultants views in relation to the questions outlined in section 2.4.
- 3.2 That from the information provided Members formulate recommendations in relation to this issue for inclusion in the Forums final report.

**Contact Officers:-** Joan Wilkins – Scrutiny Support Officer  
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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

- (a) Scrutiny Investigation into 'Sustainability of Externally Funded Community Initiatives in Schools – Scoping Report (Scrutiny Support Officer) – 5 November 2007

**Report of:** Independent Sports Consultant – D.H. Dunlop

**Subject** SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION INTO SUSTAINABILITY  
OF EXTERNALLY FUNDED COMMUNITY  
INITIATIVES IN SCHOOLS

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This report is as a result of a decision by Owton Manor Primary School to temporarily suspend community use of facilities that were Grant-Aided by an external funding agency. A condition of grant was that community use should take place and therefore the action taken by the school leaves the Local Authority (the Grant recipient) both exposed and vulnerable in terms of accountability.

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE ENQUIRY**

### **1. Role of the Local Authority – Community Initiatives in Schools**

- To ensure that projects fit in with agreed strategies, schemes, policies and procedures and in particular the recent “Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy” which states that “Particular priority must be given to improving and developing school facilities which benefit pupil education as well as Community Sport”.
- To adopt a strategic approach to the development and management of centres for community use including the identification of strategic sites at schools and a hierarchy of provision and opportunity.
- To produce a facility management strategy and determine the most appropriate and cost effective management structure to ensure the sustainability of community use on school sites.
- To co-ordinate the overall policy towards community use and develop a Team and Partnership approach with support to schools on the issue of community use of facilities.
- To recognise that many schools are unlikely to have the professional sports management skills required to operate a true and effective community use policy. Therefore a key role of the local authority is to provide a central operational and integrated management support structure. Adult and Community Services, if adequately resourced, could have a significant role to play.
- To implement a Service Level or Community Use agreement with individual schools to ensure that facilities are operated in a consistent and complimentary manner and that there is a formal commitment to community use.

- To ensure that the most effective management policies and procedures are in place and are incorporated in the Building Schools for the Future Programme and are an integral part of the Extended Schools and Community Use Programme. The Building Schools for the Future Programme represents a significant opportunity to develop school facilities for both curriculum and extra curriculum use and to benefit the community. It is vital to maximise the potential that is available.
- To provide a “Holistic Service” across the authority addressing the needs of Target Groups and ensuring a balanced programme of activities.
- To provide a common pricing policy, marketing approach, booking procedures, programmes and monitoring for community use.
- To advise on legal, financial and health and safety issues and contribute to the development of school business plans for community use.
- To identify and target potential external funding agencies for Capital and Revenue funding and co-ordinate the bidding process.

## 2. Role of Schools

- To be proactive in identifying the potential for community use initiatives and ensuring that these are included in school improvement plans.
- To work in partnership with the appropriate Local Authority departments in the development and management of community use initiatives.
- To ensure that the Governing Body of the school retains overall responsibility for the use of school facilities for community use and the potential impact on curriculum and extra curricula activities.
- To agree the most appropriate management structure in partnership with the local authority and put in place a site specific management committee to address Governance with representation from the school, local authority and the community.
- To produce a Business Plan and determine resources required identifying the additional workload for staff and how this might be resolved.
- To set standards and conditions for community use.
- To sign up to a Service Level or Community Use Agreement.
- To monitor and evaluate the community use programme.

## 3. Examples of Good Practice

### A) Within Hartlepool

#### **General comment**

- The current policy is that Children's Services is responsible for the management of community use on school sites. However management is delegated to individual schools with little central support or control.
- Effective management of community use on school sites involves a considerable commitment by school management and staff. This

arrangement can be vulnerable if there are changes in key school staff. (This is what happened at Owton Manor Primary School and was compounded by a lack of central management support). This can leave the local authority exposed and vulnerable in terms of Council's accountability when projects are externally funded and community use is a condition of grant.

- A further weakness is that a school specific approach can lead to a management of the building and its use to site specific parameters and addressing needs of specific groups rather than adopting a local authority holistic approach. Different schools currently manage their centres on a different basis. Some schools have a greater commitment to public access while others only encourage block bookings.
- It should be noted that school budgets can not be used to subsidise community use. As true community use is not self financing this produces sustainability difficulties and disadvantages use by target groups.

### **Specific examples**

- It should be recognised that there is a considerable difference to the ability of secondary and primary schools to deliver community use.

### **Secondary Schools**

- The current general position is for individual schools to identify a "Community Sports Officer". This responsibility is usually part of a much wider portfolio e.g. Deputy Head, Director of Services, Bursar, Site Supervisor.

Two examples of good practice are:-

- i) High Tunstall School. The "Life Centre" project funded by the Big Lottery Fund where the school has appointed a manager and there is good use by the community.
- i) Dyke House School – The school has a strong commitment to community use of its facilities and high usage figures. It has been recognised nationally as an example of good practice in terms of extended services and maximising the use of public facilities'.

### **Primary Schools**

- Generally community use potential is limited due to lack of appropriate facilities except for those schools that have received external funding.
- In addition primary schools are not well placed to be able to provide a management service and therefore effective community use can only occur if additional resources are available.
- An example of good practice is:



- i) Stranton Primary School – The “Stranton Centre” funded by the Space for Sport and Arts Programme and New Deal for the Communities has a dedicated Management Team funded by New Deal for the Communities and is well used by the community.

## **B) Regionally**

Following consultation with Sport England two authorities were put forward as examples of good practice. These were Durham County Council and North Tyneside M.B.C.

- i) Durham County Council – Meeting with D. Emerson Education and Community Manager.
  - Community use of schools is the responsibility of the Children's Services Department.
  - The Council has adopted a partnership approach involving the County Council, District Councils, schools and the Community. This applies across all seven districts.
  - The County has implemented a “shared use” approach identifying key school sites for community use (22 schools) and has implemented formal agreements and informal agreements.
  - To ensure Governance a Community Association has been established on each site. This has charitable status and raises funds to help subsidise community use.
  - The Council provides a direct service and financial support to each community use school site in terms of
    - staffing – a full time member of staff and sessional staff
    - revenue funding – a contribution towards energy costs, caretaking and cleaning costs.
  - For the future the Council is addressing the additional capital funding required to maximise the potential of the Building Schools for the Future programme for community use and identifying the revenue support required.
- ii) North Tyneside MBC – Meeting with Angela James, Children, Young People and Learning Department
  - North Tyneside has 11 high schools, 4 middle schools and 53 primary schools.
  - The Council does not have a facility management policy for community use and therefore there are a variety of management models which are generally led by funding mechanisms.
  - The Council has a Leisure Facilities Strategy and has adopted a policy of basing leisure facilities on school sites.
  - It is likely that with the Building Schools for the Future programme and the Extended Schools initiative the council will need to address the Facility Management issue across all Council facilities.

- Good co-operation exists between Children's Services and Community Services and there is a strong cross departmental P. E., Sport and Physical Activity Structure.
- The existing management structure for community use of schools ranges from Leisure Services managing two schools with other schools having on-site responsibility with support from Children's Services.
- Governance is through the Governing Body of the school and Steering Groups for each site have been set up to manage community use involving the school, Children's Services, Leisure Services and the community.
- The current "Mixed Bag" of Management options appears to work but the issue of management for community use is still on the agenda for North Tyneside particularly in view of future developments.

#### 4. **Role of External Funding Agencies**

Meeting with Judith Rasmussen, Regional Director Sport England North East.

- In Hartlepool the most recent examples of external funding that have provided community use initiatives involve Sport England, The Arts Council, The Big Lottery Fund and New Deal for the Communities.
- In all projects the funding has had two main benefits:- it has provided new/improved facilities for curriculum and extra curricula activities but also new opportunities for community use.
- The main funding received was for capital development with limited and time limited funding for revenue costs.
- The key role/benefit of involving external funding agencies are:-
  - i) Support and encouragement to develop robust strategies and a clear evidence base to properly plan for sport and lever additional funding.
  - ii) Provide additional funding (capital and revenue) and encourage partnership funding.
  - iii) Support for projects for additional funding.
  - iv) Provide an external assessment of projects.
  - v) Feed in examples of good practice and advice.
  - vi) Provide external monitoring and evaluation.
  - vii) Encourage implementation of National/Regional Policies of opening up school sites for community use.
  - viii) Encourage delivery of National/Regional Policies for Sports Development.
  - ix) Stamp of approval and credibility for projects.

- **Example of advice from an External Funding Agency**

“Sport England New Publication – The Win – Win Scenario – Community Sport and Arts on Education Sites”

- This document was published in October 2007 and it is recommended that local authorities refer to it to assist the development of community use on school sites.  
Relevant extracts include:-
  - A) Management – a range of options are available to manage community use on school sites.
    - i) School Based Management – through existing staff. Whilst low cost careful consideration should be given to the approach. The staff must have Sports and Arts Management experience and be given sufficient time to make it a success.
      - Through the appointment of a new post i.e. Community Use Manager or Sport and Arts Manager.
    - ii) Managed by local authority Community Services Department.
      - It is common for the community use of facilities on school sites to be managed by a Community Services Department. Governance is vested in a committee controlled by the school Governing Body. The management function is delivered by staff employed and trained by the Council under the terms of a transfer of control agreement often called a Community Use Agreement.
    - iii) Managed by a Trust.
    - iv) Managed by Commercial Management.
  - B) Revenue Funding.
    - Whichever the scale of the Community Sport and Arts programmes it will need funding from either a new approach to the schools delegated budget or from new internal/external sources.
    - At present schools can not use Delegated Budgets to support or subsidise community use activity.
    - However the government is making additional funding available for schools via the School Standards Grant which may assist towards the development of extended services and activities.

### C) Capital Funding

- The government has committed additional funding to support schools in setting up and embedding extended services.
- Capital funding for new and improved education buildings and support facilities has never been greater than under the Building Schools for the Future programme. Whilst these funds are primarily for facilities that support improved standards of education and will not fund spaces exclusively for community use, in every case there is a strong presumption that new facilities on school sites funded by the programme will be used to further the aims of the Extended Schools Programme.

## 5. Community Leadership Role

- To support the delivery of Sport Development Activity undertaken by the Council and/or partner organisations.
- Community Leaders should be practically involved in and have a positive role to play in any community use initiative to give.
  - i) Support
  - ii) Advice and Experience
  - iii) Local knowledge and contacts
  - iv) A strategic approval
  - v) Hands on help.

## 6. **Future Management Proposals**

### A) Community Use of Schools

- To be successful this requires a clear management, monitoring and evaluation process, additional administration, additional resources (Staff and Funding) and site management.
- Community use initiatives are not self financing and sustainable. They require on going revenue support particularly if target groups and the socially disadvantaged are to be involved and that a true and balanced programme for community use can be offered including Casual/Pay as you Play approach.
- The redevelopment and/or refurbishment of school sites is an opportunity to contribute to the consolidation of a service to provide a comprehensive package and address some of the current issues/problems.

## B) Issues

- **Funding** – To ensure true community use on a casual basis is sustainable and attract Target Groups additional on-going revenue funding will be required either to Individual schools (e.g. a community use budget) or to another management option.
- **Staffing** – If management is retained by individual schools there will be an additional work load for staff to manage and oversee the programme. This will need to be addressed in Staff Structures/contracts of work.
  - If outsourced to another authority department then the implications of the required additional staff and financial resources need to be recognised.
- **Management** – There needs to be a clear management structure within schools to achieve governance and satisfy Governing Body requirements.
  - Equally there need to be a central operational management support structure within the local authority.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation** – An essential need for any community use initiative is that it should be monitored and evaluated on a regular basis.

## C) Options for Future Management

- It should be noted that this issue was touched on in the Strategy “Indoor Leisure Facilities for Hartlepool”.
- In the Document the point was made that there has been a shift away from Local Authority Direct Services management towards management by Private Sector Contractors and more recently by Trusts. One of the reasons has been to attract additional finance.
- A survey of 442 Local Authorities in 2005 shows 42% ran their Leisure Services Management in-house, 20% used a Management Contractor and 20% a Trust.
- The options for Leisure Management are therefore –
  - i) **Direct Service (Community Services)**
    - This is often used in the Management of local authority and community use facilities. Under this arrangement full responsibility for income and expenditure, pricing, programming lies within the council as does the risk
  - i) **Children's Services**
    - The Education Sector is another option for management of community use of schools. This is the approach adopted in Hartlepool however, the responsibility is delegated to individual schools. It should be noted that the Children's Services Department is committed to working with other Council departments to deliver community sport in schools.

- ii) **Private Management Contractors**
  - Private contractors can be involved in leisure management contracts to local authorities.
  - This type of approach does not occur in Hartlepool.
  
- iv) **Trusts**
  - Not for profit Trusts are classed as social enterprise organisations and the majority of these have developed from local authorities in-house direct service organisations.
  - Again this type of approach does not occur in Hartlepool.
  
- The Space for Sport and Arts Initiative (4 primary schools) provided guidance on management options. These were:-
  - Option 1 Direct Management by School Staff
  - Option 2 Direct Management by a Governing Body Working Group
  - Option 3 Direct Management by a Governing Body employing a Manager
  - Option 4 Direct Management by a Governing Body contracting an outside Group to manage
  - Option 5 Transfer of control to a Community Group or Trust
  - Option 6 Transfer of contract to a Commercial Management Group

Initially the approach adopted in Hartlepool was Option 3.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There is a need to consider any refurbishment of existing or development of new facilities on school sites for community use in a strategic context identifying the key strategic sites together with a hierarchy of provision for community use throughout the town, e.g. key site secondary schools supporting feeder primaries.
  
2. There is an urgent need for the council to develop a Facilities Management Strategy for all leisure facilities.
  
3. There is a need to adopt a clear policy and management structures for community use of schools prior to the Building Schools of the Future and Extended Schools Programmes. Currently there is no clear policy which leaves the Council exposed and vulnerable in terms of accountability. Any policy should be implemented under the Building Schools for the Future Programme with clear principles for community use of school facilities. The policy should also be an integrated element of the Extended Schools initiatives.

4. There is a need for the Council to adopt a strong management commitment across departments to co-ordinate activity and resources to maximise the use of existing/new school facilities for community use.
5. Whilst the scope of this investigation is “Sustainability of Externally Funded Community Initiatives in Schools” it is recommended that any agreed Policies/Procedures are applied to all school sites where community use takes place.
6. That any Policies/Procedures adopted should take into account and be compatible with the recommendations in Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy, the Borough Councils Sport and Recreation Strategy and the following P.P.G.17 Open Space Strategy.
7. To assist schools, develop and sustain community use it is strongly recommended that the most efficient and effective way forward would be for the Council to establish a central operational and integrated management support structure to co-ordinate the overall approach. It is felt that the Council's Adult and Community Services Department, if adequately resourced, should have a significant role to play in the process.
8. The central model if implemented would have significant benefits to the Council in terms of:-
  - i) a co-ordinated approach to management information systems, booking procedures, pricing policy, marketing, programming, performance monitoring and accountability.
  - ii) Providing the most cost effective operational arrangement and the most benefit to the whole community together with a Holistic Service delivery across the authority.
  - iii) Providing the necessary strategic approach to facility and sports development objectives.
  - iv) Pulling together all the necessary groups and agencies (internal and external) that are essential for development of sustainable community use.
9. A partnership approach with schools is adopted to determine the most appropriate and cost effective management structure and operation (Direct/Indirect). Within this approach the identification of key sites and how none key sites are managed on a Cluster Basis is fundamental to the process. This brings into focus the inability of the local authority to impose procedures in individual schools.
10. That the importance of governance is addressed and that the appropriate Management Committee or Community Association is established on each site with representation from the school, Children's Services, Adult and Community Services and User Groups (The Community).

11. That a Service Level or Community Use Agreement with Individual Schools is implemented to ensure that the facilities are operated in a consistent and complimentary manner and that there is a firm commitment to true community use involving casual and pay as you play opportunities.
12. That there is recognition of the need for additional Capital Funding to realise/maximise the potential for community use within the Building Schools for the Future Programme and indeed other identified sites (the Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy identified a minimum of approximately £125,000 per key site school.)
13. That there is recognition of the importance of “Ongoing Revenue Funding”. This is vital if community use of schools initiatives are to be sustainable, true community use on a Casual/Pay as you play basis delivered and if Target Groups/Disadvantaged Groups are not excluded. The appointment of qualified and dedicated staff and contributions towards running costs are essential if the programme is to be successful. (The Durham County example would indicate something in the region of £50 – 100,000 per year per key site school; however more work would need to be undertaken on costs and management models which would be dependent on facilities, staff required and programmes of use.
14. If the Council decides to agree in principle to a new way forward in terms of the management and sustainability of community use initiatives in schools this would involve a substantial policy change which would have resource implications. To take this matter forward it is recommended that this is undertaken in incremental stages through a Joint Steering Group involving Children's Services and Adult and Community Services with a clear timescale for delivery. This may require additional resources in order to facilitate the work and meet deadlines. There is some urgency to this work to ensure policies are in place to implement under the Building Schools for the Future Programmes.

## CONCLUSION

- It should be recognised that this report has been a “Fast Track” exercise conducted in four days. It should be regarded as a start of a process and that the recommendations need to be subject to more time and careful consideration and consultation.
- It is hoped that the contents of the report provide information and “Sign Posts” for a way forward to enable informed discussions to take place before a policy is developed and adopted.
- Hartlepool has a tremendous opportunity to develop a strategic approach to the development, management and use of school facilities for the community. As this is an issue which most local authorities are having to address I am sure the outcome will be of wider value and interest. However it is important to “Grasp



the Nettle” and act quickly as the Building Schools for the Future Programme produces a tight timescale.

### **Consultation**

- The following organisations/individuals have been consulted on the production of the report.
  - i) Children's Services – Alan Kell
  - ii) Adult and Community Services – Pat Usher
  - iii) Dyke House School – John Taylor, Deputy Head
  - iv) Sport England (North East) – Judith Rasmussen, Regional Director
  - v) Durham County Council – Dave Emerson, Education and Community Manager
  - vi) North Tyneside MBC – Angela James, Children, Young People & Learning Department

# CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT

4 February 2008



**Report of:** Scrutiny Support Officer

**Subject:** SUSTAINABILITY OF EXTERNALLY FUNDED COMMUNITY INITIATIVES IN SCHOOLS – EVIDENCE FROM THE AUTHORITY'S PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES – COVERING REPORT

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## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Forum that the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services has been invited to attend this meeting to provide evidence in relation to the ongoing investigation into the sustainability of externally funded community initiatives in schools.

## 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of this Forum on 5 November 2007, the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry/Sources of Evidence were approved by the Forum for this scrutiny investigation.
- 2.2 Consequently, the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Children's Services has been invited to this meeting to provide evidence to Forum in relation to her responsibilities, and views on, the sustainability of externally funded community initiatives in schools.
- 2.3 During this evidence gathering session with the Authority's Children's Services Portfolio Holder, it is suggested that responses should be sought to the following key questions:-
- (a) What are your roles and responsibilities in relation to the provision of externally funded community initiatives in schools?
  - (b) What do you feel are the major issues affecting the sustainability of externally funded community initiatives in Hartlepool schools?
  - (c) How do you feel the provision of externally funded community initiatives in schools in Hartlepool could be made more sustainable in the future?

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 That Members of the Forum consider the views of the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services in relation to the questions outlined in section 2.3.

#### **CONTACT OFFICER**

Joan Wilkins – Scrutiny Support Officer  
Chief Executive's Department- Corporate Strategy  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Tel: 01429 523 339  
Email: joan.wilkins@hartlepool.gov.uk

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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

- (a) Scrutiny Investigation into 'Sustainability of Externally Funded Community Initiatives in Schools – Scoping Report (Scrutiny Support Officer) – 5 November 2007

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

4 February 2008



**Report of:** Scrutiny Support Officer

**Subject** SUSTAINABILITY OF EXTERNALLY FUNDED COMMUNITY INITIATIVES IN SCHOOLS – EVIDENCE FROM SCHOOLS WHERE EXTERNALLY FUNDED COMMUNITY INITIATIVES ARE LOCATED – COVERING REPORT

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform Members of the Forum that representatives from schools where externally funded community initiatives are located have been invited to attend this meeting to provide evidence in relation to the ongoing investigation into the sustainability of externally funded community initiatives in schools.

### 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Members will recall that the Forum, at its meeting on the 5 November 2007, approved the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry/Sources of Evidence for its investigation into the sustainability of externally funded community initiatives in Hartlepool schools.

2.2 As part of this investigation the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum is keen to hear the views, and experiences, of representatives from schools in Hartlepool where externally funded community initiatives are located. To assist in obtaining these views invitations have been extended to Head teachers, and Community Building / Activities Managers, from the following schools where funding has been utilised from Sport England for the provision of community initiatives:

- Brougham Primary School;
- West View Primary School;
- Stranton Primary School; and
- Owton Manor Primary School.

- 2.3 In addition to these schools, and in accordance with the wishes of the Forum, an invitation has also been extended to representatives from High Tunstall College of Science to attend today's meeting to discuss their experiences of this issue.
- 2.4 During this evidence gathering session it is suggested that responses should be sought to the following key questions:-
- (a) What do you feel are the major issues affecting the sustainability of externally funded community initiatives in Hartlepool schools when initial capital investment comes to an end?
  - (b) What problems, if any, have you experienced sustaining externally funded community initiatives in your school when initial capital investment comes to an end?
  - (c) What actions, if any, have you taken to improve the sustainability of externally funded community initiatives in your school when initial capital investment comes to an end;
  - (d) How do you feel the provision of externally funded community initiatives in schools in Hartlepool could be made more sustainable in the future?
  - (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 evidence provided and take the views / suggestions expressed into consideration during the formulation of the Forum's final report.

**Contact Officers:-** Joan Wilkins – Scrutiny Support Officer  
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### BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

- (a) Scrutiny Investigation into 'Sustainability of Externally Funded Community Initiatives in Schools – Scoping Report (Scrutiny Support Officer) – 5 November 2007