

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITIES and HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

28 February 2017

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 PLAYSCHEME – REVIEW OF EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EQIA)

To review the EQIA in relation to the provision of Playscheme Plus for children with additional needs in the light of experience gained from the 2016 play scheme programme.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Members will be aware that, following a review of by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, delivery of the Council's Summer Playscheme was outsourced to an external provider from the summer of 2016. A report to this Board on 14th November 2016 noted that the change in approach had been successful overall both in terms of the quality of service delivery achieved and the reduction in costs to the Council that were generated.

1.1.2 One outstanding recommendation originally agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee now needs to be addressed. This relates to the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) prepared as part of the review which highlighted the importance of 'Playscheme Plus'. This enables children with additional needs to attend the Playscheme with the benefit of one to one support. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended that a specific review of this provision should be undertaken to review the first year of the new arrangements and to evaluate any equality impacts or issues arising on that specific part of the offer.

1.2 Findings

1.2.1 Overall, the numbers accessing Playscheme Plus in 2016 totalled 2 children compared to 7 children who attended in 2015. However, the following factors need to be taken into account:

- the approach of the external provider has focused on a more inclusive approach for children with extra needs. Children who attend a mainstream school for at least 80% of the year are now encouraged to be part of the general programme without formal 1-2-1 support. The provider also

discusses the needs of the individual children with their parents to explore whether 1-2-1 support is the best solution for them.

- some of the Playscheme Plus children attending in 2015 were no longer eligible to attend in 2016 as they then were above the upper age limit.

1.2.2 Given the above, the reduction in numbers attending in 2016 could therefore mainly be due to one or both of these factors. Notwithstanding, it is recommended that, for the 2017, we seek assurances from the external provider that Playscheme Plus opportunities are sufficiently advertised in their promotional material to ensure that all families are fully aware of this important part of the Playscheme 'offer'. The Borough Council will also be able to help promote this.

1.3 Legal Implications

1.3.1 N/A

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.4.1 Financial provision is made from existing budgets to enable families to access Playscheme Plus support.

1.5 Risk Assessment

1.5.1 N/A

1.6 Equality Impact Assessment

1.7 Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups, and (iii) foster good relations between people from different groups. The decisions recommended through this paper directly impact on end users.

1.8 Recommendations

1.8.1 That sufficient publicity **BE GIVEN** to the Playscheme Plus offer in 2017 and in future years to ensure potential attendees are fully aware of the additional support being offered.

The Chief Executive confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

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Nil

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Chief Executive