

For publication

Play Strategy 2022 – 2030 (L000)

Meeting:	Cabinet Council
Date:	22 February 2022 23 February 2022
Cabinet portfolio:	Health and Wellbeing
Directorate:	Leisure, Culture and Community Wellbeing
For publication	

1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To seek Council approval of the Chesterfield Play Strategy, 2022 - 2030.

2.0 Recommendations

That Cabinet recommends to full Council:

- 2.1 That a new Play Strategy be approved and adopted for the period 2022 through 2030.
- 2.2 That the Service Director for Leisure, Culture and Community Wellbeing be invited to develop a five-year costed delivery plan, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, to give effect to the Strategy's aims and objectives and for this delivery plan to be presented for approval at future meetings of the Cabinet and full Council.

3.0 Reason for recommendations

- 3.1 It is a priority for the Council to have a modern and relevant Play Strategy that reflects recent assessments and national, regional and local initiatives. This will enable the Council to strategically plan and prioritise resources across the Borough, and to work appropriately with developers and other stakeholders.

- 3.2 The effective management of our play spaces will continue to support the Borough in being a great destination; and a healthy and active place to live and work.

4.0 Report details

Background

- 4.1 The Play Strategy establishes an understanding and ambition for children and young people's play in the borough from 2022 until 2030. A robust evidence base has been drawn from national policies and initiatives, local consultation and analysis of existing play provision. This has enabled the development of local standards and assessment criteria, which in turn have provided the framework for this strategy. The updated strategy, following consultation, is attached at Appendix A, parts 1 and 2.
- 4.2 The draft Play Strategy was considered at the Cabinet meeting on 6 July 2021 where it was resolved that the draft strategy be approved for wider consultation.

Consultation on the Play Strategy 2022 – 2030

- 4.3 The consultation programme for the draft Play Strategy took place between August and October 2021. This programme, in addition to ongoing internal officer engagement, included:
- An online survey for members of the public to respond.
 - A session with Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.
 - An online survey for stakeholder groups such as 'Friends' groups and Sports Clubs to respond.
 - A presentation and online survey for the Councils Equalities and Diversity Group.
- 4.4 Initially the consultation was held over a four-week period, this was subsequently extended to six weeks to enable further engagement of stakeholders in the consultation process.
- 4.5 Fifty-five responses to the online consultation were received. The comments and responses are set out in Appendix B.

- 4.6 The consultation with Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee enabled further discussion and consideration of the key issues, the feedback is set out in Appendix C.
- 4.7 Comments from both the online survey and the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny panel did highlight the need to improve ongoing maintenance of play spaces. It was a particular concern of some respondents that whilst the play offer was good, maintenance did not meet expectation. This feedback will be reviewed in detail by the service, and incorporated as part of the development of the delivery plan.
- 4.8 Feedback from the consultation was positive and supportive of the strategy itself, including its key themes and direction of travel. As a result there have been no significant changes to the strategy following the consultation.
- 4.9 It is proposed that, given the close link between the parks and open space strategy and the play strategy, the duration of the play strategy is aligned to the parks and open spaces strategy. Both strategies would therefore cover the period from 2022 until 2030.
- 4.10 The aims have also been updated to more overtly set out the priority to reduce inequality in areas of highest deprivation.
- 4.11 Other amendments in relation to the structure of document have been made in response to the feedback received. This includes for example, the inclusion of an executive summary to help capture for the reader the key areas of the strategy.

Play Strategy 2022 - 2030

- 4.12 The vision, updated aims and themes for the strategy, that will set the framework for the development of the five-year costed delivery plan, are set out in the paragraphs below. The final version of the strategy is attached at Appendix A, parts 1 and 2.
- 4.13 The vision for play across the borough is:

'For every play space to be a destination, by creating a variety of sustainable play experiences that offer children and young people of all

ages and abilities accessible, quality, challenging and fun opportunities for play.'

4.14 The aims of the strategy are:

- To increase play experiences for children, young people and families.
- To reduce inequality in those areas of highest deprivation according to the index multiple deprivation by providing good quality and accessible play experiences.
- To raise the standard, quality and experience of play opportunities across Chesterfield borough.
- To widen the concept of play and enable innovation.
- To improve play accessibility for our children, young people and diverse communities.
- To facilitate play experiences that are inclusive and accessible to all children and young people.
- To ensure that play experiences are properly resourced and sustainable.

4.15 The key themes that set the delivery context for the strategy are focussed on:

- Raising awareness of play
- Raising the quality of play
- Improving the range and accessibility of play
- Informal and natural play opportunities
- Maximising resources to improve and develop play
- Strategic Management and Growth Sites

4.16 The updated and refreshed strategy will become the key document guiding the Council's management of and investment in play experiences until 2030. By adopting this strategy, the Council will have:

- Clear and transparent guidance and priorities for improving play experiences across the borough, setting the context for the development of a five-year costed delivery plan.
- Evidence of local leadership on and commitment to play to underpin bids for funding play development.

- Clear co-ordination with the Council Plan and the adopted Local Plan.
- Improved accessibility to play opportunities and experiences.
- An evidence base and local standards to underpin the negotiation of 'planning gain' for the creation of appropriate play experiences across the Borough.

5.0 Alternative options

- 5.1 The alternative option would have been to not develop a play strategy and subsequent five-year costed delivery plan and continue with current arrangements whereby the Council Plan provides the broad strategic framework and activities are guided by different team service plans.
- 5.2 The preferred option, as covered in this report, supports both the strategic need and operational delivery requirements to maintain high standards through management and investment in play experiences.
- 5.3 The preferred option will support the Council to target resources effectively and efficiently through using the clear framework that the play strategy provides.

6.0 Implications for consideration – Financial and value for money

- 6.1 No specific financial implications have been identified from the consultation on the strategy.
- 6.2 To maintain the quality and the desired levels of positive customer experience across our play spaces the Council, in addition to its general fund resource will continue its highly successful approach to securing external funding to enable the progressive development of the Council's play spaces and experiences through the strategy. This includes:
- Council funding: capital and revenue funding allocated to deliver facilities and improvements within the Council's ownership
 - CIL and Section 106 developer contributions
 - Grant funding for example - Landfill Tax Credits
- 6.3 In the last five years the Council has enabled the investment of over £770,000 in play infrastructure in addition to the Parks and Open Space

services core general fund resource allocation which is currently £2.1m per annum.

7.0 Implications for consideration – Legal

- 7.1 Article 31 of the UN Convention on the rights of the child states; ‘Parties recognise the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.’ ‘Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.’
- 7.2 The Council recognises the importance of play to children and young people and the strategy will enable the enhancement and development of play experiences.

8.0 Implications for consideration – Human resources

- 8.1 The Environmental Services section has recently completed a service redesign which has considered at its heart how the alignment of the street scene and green spaces teams can become more focussed on service delivery through the priorities as outlined in the strategy.
- 8.2 The service redesign will support improvements in the way in which ongoing maintenance of play spaces is achieved, bringing with it a sharper focus on the responsiveness to undertake repairs.

9.0 Implications for consideration – Council plan

- 9.1 The play strategy positively contributes to the following council plan objectives:
- Improving quality of life for local people.
 - Improving our environment and enhance community safety for all our communities and future generations.
 - Helping our communities to improve their health and wellbeing.
- 9.2 Being active through play can make a unique contribution to children’s health, wellbeing and holistic development, which cannot be obtained from more structured forms of physical activity or formal sport. Anyone can take part in play, there is little or no cost to the participant and does

not need high skill levels to specifically engage. This along with the natural creativity and flexibility of play makes it an important part of a child / young person's development. The Play Strategy will seek to positively contribute to this.

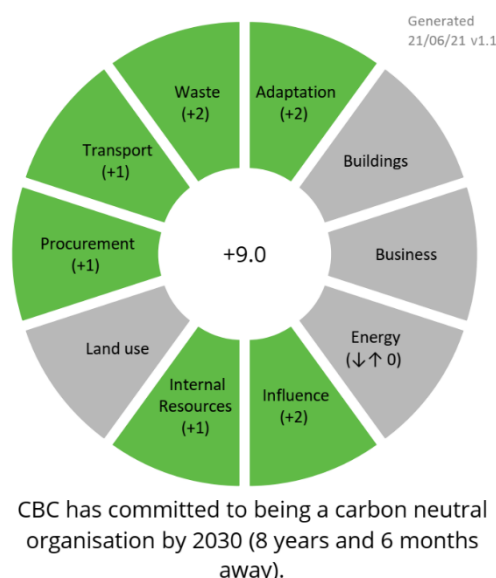
9.3 Outdoor play opportunities can also be beneficial to mental health and wellbeing by providing important opportunities to interact with nature and other people. The Council will through the strategy continue to work with partners to maximise the benefits to physical and mental health through play.

9.4 Providing good quality play opportunities will support the Council's wider ambitions regarding making Chesterfield a thriving borough by actively contributing to making Chesterfield A great place to live, work and visit.

10.0 Implications for consideration – Climate change

10.1 The impact of the Play Strategy is defined by the Council's Climate Change Impact Assessment Decision Making Tool and a summary image of the assessment is included below at para. 10.2.

10.2



10.3 Opportunities exist within our open space to explore the inclusion of natural play settings. Existing features can be utilised such as woodlands, streams, slopes and fallen wood. These opportunities need to be measured against the risk of engagement but equally the approach needs to reflect the positive outcomes from such engagement. By adapting play

spaces to include natural elements through the strategy we could further influence the design of play spaces to take account of these less traditional options and opportunities for play which will have a positive impact on Climate Change.

10.4 Through the strategy our procurement processes will include further requirements on suppliers to use materials that are more sympathetic to the environment. For example, the types of paint used and where and how those materials are sourced and transported to and from.

10.5 A full Climate Change Impact Assessment is attached at Appendix D.

11.0 Implications for consideration – Equality and diversity

11.1 The Equality Impact Assessment is attached at Appendix E. No negative impacts for groups with protected characteristics have been identified.

12.0 Implications for consideration – Risk Management

12.1 Risk matrix

Description of the Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigating Action	Impact	Likelihood
Strategy not adopted	High	Low	The strategy has been developed to fully reflect the challenges of land use and play development. It has been informed by a varied evidence base and as such it supports the Council vision and council plan objectives. A full consultation programme has been undertaken to ensure local input and engagement to reflect need.	Medium	Low
Insufficient resources available to deliver the	High	Medium	The Council will continue to maximise its use of internal resource and will compliment this by	Medium	Low

Play Strategy 2022 – 2030.			continuing its highly successful approach of attracting external funding, in parallel with council funding sources, where appropriate, to support the delivery of the strategy. Following adoption of the strategy a five-year costed delivery plan will be produced.		
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Decision information

Key decision number	1034
Wards affected	ALL

Document information

Report author	
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Appendices to the report	
Appendix A Part 1	Draft Play Strategy 2022 – 2030
Appendix A Part 2	Evidence base
Appendix B	General Online Consultation Comments
Appendix C	Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel Comments
Appendix D	Climate Change Impact Assessment
Appendix E	Equalities Impact Assessment