



# Service Policy Panel

## Briefing Paper

Report of: Cultural Services Manager  
Date: 21<sup>st</sup> November 2006  
Open

### Play Development

#### 1. Summary

1.1 The purpose of this briefing paper is to inform Members about the implementation of the internal review of Play Development.

#### 2. Background

2.1 A report on the internal review of play development was made to the Community and Leisure Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2006.

2.2 The Council has provided a Play Development Service for many years. The Service comprises:-

- After School Clubs (term times)
- Holiday Schemes.

2.3 The After School Club Service was reviewed last year and the Council currently operates clubs in certain schools, as well as offering 6 week blocks of specialist activities to other clubs and schools. This was introduced to support, help and complement voluntary and private sector provision.

2.4 Recently, Officers undertook a review of Holiday Provision, which was prompted in part by the Budget Review Group, but mainly by the comparatively poor take up of Holiday Schemes Places in Summer 2005.

2.5 Attendance at our Summer Holiday Playschemes in 2005 (Kids Klubs) was 67%.

2.6 In summer (2005) the Kids Klubs ran at 5 locations for 4 weeks and 1 location for 2 weeks. Total attendance at the schemes were 2,838. The schemes operated for 5-12 year olds.

- 2.7 The Council also operated 3 sites for longer hours (9.00am – 5.00pm) in response to feedback from working parents. The extended hours, however, were not as popular as had been expected.
- 2.8 A comparison with other local authorities suggests that reductions in attendance took place everywhere in 2005.
- 2.9 All of the Council's Play Schemes are OFSTED Registered. The staff were praised for being inventive with their activities and having a particularly professional approach to their work.
- 2.10 Each child had a feedback form to complete and the high quality staff continually featured.
- 2.11 The Kids Klubs are managed as part of our Summer Programme on offer to young people. Activities also took place at the Museum, Sports and Leisure Centres and by the teams in Sports Development, Rangers, Events and Arts, including Kidderminster Arts Festival.

### **3. Changes in Holiday Provision – Summer 2006**

- 3.1 The following changes were agreed for summer 2006.
- Operate Kids Klubs for ages 5-10 years, OFSTED Registered and to include Fun Days every Friday. (This was a change from age group previously 5-12 years).
  - New programme of activities on offer for 10-14 year age group Summer Action Squad. There will be a 6-week daily programme of activities including Sports, Arts, Rangers, Play and Trips. The activities are specifically marketed for the older age group.
  - New style and look of brochure including a specific section for 10-14 year olds.
- 3.2 All of the changes were as a result of consultation and the consequential internal review.
- 3.3 The changes were implemented within existing budgets.

### **4. Results from Summer Holiday Scheme 2006**

#### **Kids Klub**

- 4.1 Occupancy for the summer play schemes has continued to fall and was 47%.
- 4.2 After conducting research into this reduction, other play schemes around the county had suffered similar or worse reductions in attendance.

- 4.3 There are currently many other competitors in this area, including B & Q, the warehouse cinema and numerous schools and churches.

#### Summer Action Squad (SAS)

- 4.4 The Summer Action Squad is a new scheme introduced this year which was aimed at 10-14 year age group.
- 4.5 The activities provided were a range of sports, arts, play and rangers, for example Fashion Workshop, Survival Skills, Multi Sports, Make your own DVD.
- 4.6 Attendance was good and overall 52% was achieved. The sports activities were less popular and if the sports were removed attendance for SAS was 65%.
- 4.7 The formula for these activities seemed to work really well. The days were planned to provide quality leisure opportunities in activities young people do not usually get a chance to participate in at school.
- 4.8 The SAS activities also provided better value for money as they are cheaper per participant to run.

#### Other Activities

- 4.9 Occupancy rates:

Bewdley Museum 83%

Kidderminster Arts Festival 20% increase (6,000 people)

Hotspots and Street Football 62% (would have been significantly higher had it not been for poor weather in the last 2 weeks)

Sports activities (tennis, athletics, girls football) – 95%

Fun Box – increase from 2005

Rangers – 90%

Wyre Forest Glades Leisure Centre – Kraft Club – 69%

Wyre Forest Glades Leisure Centre – Day Camp – 27%

#### Questionnaire Results

- 4.10 Questionnaires were analysed and revealed:

- 92% said the activity was value for money
- 95% said staff were helpful and pleasant

- 100% thought the activity was OK or better (75% liked it very much)
- 57% enjoyed the activity more than last year
- 38% enjoyed the activity the same as last year

## **5.0 Way Forward**

5.1 The results from the 2006 summer holiday scheme suggest that the Council is over-providing structured play schemes (Kids Klubs). Demand has fallen dramatically and this appears to be due to 2 factors:

- More provision by other organisations
- Desire of young people to participate in less formal play activities

5.2 The Summer Action Squads were a real success in terms of enjoyment and attendance and are better value for money.

5.3 It is proposed that for next year's summer holiday schemes we will reduce the number of structured schemes (Kids Klubs) from 5 to 2 and introduce more Summer Action Squad activities across the ages, within current budgets.

## **6.0 Financial Implications**

6.1 There are no financial implications as any changes to the programme will be made within existing budgets.

## **7.0 Legal & Policy Implications**

7.1 There are no legal or policy implications.

## **8.0 Conclusion**

8.1 The Play section continually strives to improve the service it provides and these further changes will hopefully provide more quality opportunities for young people in the District.

## **Background Papers**

None.

### **Officer Contact Details:**

Kay Higman  
Cultural Services Manager  
01562 732902  
kay.higman@wyreforestdc.gov.uk