

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SAFEGUARDING, COMMUNITIES AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE/CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD IN MEETING ROOM 1, GUILDHALL ON WEDNESDAY, 17 JANUARY 2018**

**MEMBERS**

Councillor Derek Wright, Chair  
Councillor Beverley Parry-Jones, Vice-Chair

Councillor	Trevor Bates	Councillor	John Pritchard
“	I David Bithell, MBE	“	Rondo Roberts
“	Brian Cameron	“	Debbie Wallice
“	Krista Childs	“	Andy Williams
“	* Russell Gilmartin	“	Nigel Williams
“	* Gwenfair Jones		

\*Absent

Also Present – Councillors William Baldwin and Paul Rogers

**42 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Russell Gilmartin and Gwenfair Jones.

**43 DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS, IF ANY**

Members were reminded of their responsibility, under Paragraph 11 of the Members' Code of Conduct, to declare any interests in relation to any business to be transacted at this meeting. The following declaration was made:

**Agenda Item 5 – Play Pledge and Play Sufficiency Partnership**

Councillor Brian Cameron – Personal and Prejudicial – being an appointed Member of Caia Park and Hightown Community First Cluster Board and the Community First Programme may be mentioned. The Councillor remained in the meeting and claimed an exemption and took part in the discussion and voting thereon.

Councillor Krista Childs – Personal – being a Trustee of Wrexham Youth and Play Partnership. The Councillor remained in the meeting taking part in the discussion and voting thereon.

**Agenda Item 6 – Play Mitigation Reductions in Funding for Playwork and Alternative Models for Securing Play Sufficiency**

Councillor Brian Cameron – Personal and Prejudicial – being an appointed Member of Caia Park and Hightown Community First Cluster Board and the Community First Programme may be mentioned. The Councillor remained in the meeting and claimed an exemption and took part in the discussion and voting thereon.

Councillor Krista Childs – Personal – being a Trustee of Wrexham Youth and Play

Partnership. The Councillor remained in the meeting taking part in the discussion and voting thereon.

#### **44 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 December 2017 were submitted.

**AGREED – That the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 December 2017 be signed as a correct record.**

#### **45 WORK PROGRAMME**

The Head of Finance submitted a report (HF/07/18s) to assist the Committee in considering and agreeing its Work programme for the coming year.

Suzanne Price, Scrutiny Facilitator, introduced the report and advised Members that the changes referred to at the previous meeting had been provisionally scheduled into the Work programme, a copy of which was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

Members considered the report and the following matters were raised:

- An All-Member Workshop on Direct Payments would be held at the Guildhall, Wrexham on Tuesday, 23 January 2018 at 10.00am.
- The Head of Adult Social Care had e-mailed a list of charges levied by other local authorities for Telecare Services to Committee Members.
- Further information was awaited from the Lead Member for People – Communities, Partnerships, Public Protection and Community Safety to enable pre-decision scrutiny to be taken on the budget proposal to change the future funding of Police Community Support Workers within Wrexham.
- The impact on the Third Sector of the implementation of the budget proposal to increase the cost of childcare training provided by the Council to the Third and Private Sector, be included in the Children's Social Care report due to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee in December 2018.

**AGREED – That the draft Work Programme attached at Appendix 1 to report HF/07/18s be approved.**

#### **46 PLAY PLEDGE AND PLAY SUFFICIENCY PARTNERSHIP**

The Lead Member for People – Youth Services and Anti-Poverty submitted a report (HEd/04/18) which enabled the Committee to consider revised proposals for the endorsement of a Play Pledge and the subsequent development of a Play Sufficiency Partnership to oversee the Local Authority's work in respect of the Play Sufficiency Duty.

The Lead Member together with the Service Manager – Prevention and Support

gave a brief overview of the content of the report. Advice and guidance had been received from Heads of Department on how the proposed Play Pledge could be utilised to create advocates for Play across Council Departments where capacity and resources allowed. The Play Pledge has also been endorsed by the Council's Strategic Management Team. The Lead Member now sought the Scrutiny Committee's comments and support before presenting the Play Pledge and supporting documents to the Executive Board for endorsement. A copy of the revised Play Pledge had been attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

Members considered the report and raised the following matters in particular:

- The Play Pledge would ensure that Play was a central consideration in the development of all Council policies. With reference to the last bullet point, some Members queried the revised wording 'where capacity and resources allow' and sought assurance that there will be an ongoing commitment from all Local Authority departments to the Play Pledge and Play Sufficiency Partnership.
- A Member commented that the revised Play Pledge did not contain any reference to protecting public open / green space for children's play. The Open Space Audit and Assessment Report undertaken by the Planning Department in 2015 had identified a deficit of public open / green space in many communities and this could have an impact on securing sufficient opportunities for children's play in the future.

In response, the Lead Member reminded Members that planning policy was not within his remit but that of the Lead Member for Organisation – Planning and Corporate Services.

- The Scrutiny Facilitator commented that this Scrutiny Committee had previously recommended that the Planning Policy Panel 'pays particular attention to the deficit of public open space in many areas and the impact of this in providing play sufficiency for the future' when considering the emerging Local Development Plan and this recommendation had been accepted (Minute Ref 74 2016 Resolution (v)). Members requested that the Committee's support for play and the need to retain public open space be reiterated to the Planning Policy Panel.
- The Chair requested that the Lead Member provides an indication as to when the revised Play Pledge would be submitted to the Executive Board for consideration.

#### **AGREED -**

- (i) That the Lead Member for Youth Services and Anti-Poverty submit his recommendations in relation to the Play Pledge to the Executive Board by June 2018 and that if he is unable to do so, he attends the July 2018 meeting of this Scrutiny Committee to provide an explanation.**
- (ii) That the Lead Member for Youth Services and Anti-Poverty presents Wrexham's next Play Sufficiency Assessment and associated Action Plan due to be completed by April 2019 to this Scrutiny Committee prior**

to its consideration by the Executive Board, and that the report includes an update on the Play Pledge and the membership and work of the Play Sufficiency Partnership.

- (iii) That the Scrutiny Committee reiterates its April 2016 recommendation to the Planning Policy Panel that it pays particular attention to Matter C in the Play Sufficiency Action Plan – ‘Ensure that the Play Sufficiency Duty and findings from Wrexham’s Play Sufficiency Assessments inform the new Local Development Plan and any subsequent supplementary planning guidance and pays particular attention to the deficit of public open space in many areas and the impact of this in providing play sufficiency for the future’.

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#### **MITIGATION REDUCTIONS IN FUNDING FOR PLAYWORK AND ALTERNATIVE MODELS FOR SECURING PLAY SUFFICIENCY**

The Lead Member for People – Youth Services and Anti-Poverty submitted a report (HEd/05/08) which had been produced in response to the following two recommendations made at the meeting of the Safeguarding, Communities and Well-being Scrutiny Committee held on 5 September 2017 following consideration of the Play Sufficiency Duty report.

- (i) That the appropriate Lead Member(s) and the responsible officers to report back to this Scrutiny Committee on how the funding reductions for Playwork can be mitigated to minimise the loss of ‘play’ in the County Borough after April 2018, to the January 2018 scrutiny committee meeting. This should be provided under section 11 of the Play Sufficiency Duty, which places a duty on this Council to assess and secure play opportunities for children in the County Borough.
- (ii) That the Scrutiny Committee receives a report exploring alternative funding and alternative models of delivering play sufficiency for all children across the county borough at its January 2018 meeting.

The Lead Member together with the Service Manager – Prevention and Support introduced the report and provided an update on a range of strategic work being undertaken in support of the Play Sufficiency Duty to minimise the loss of funding arising from the closure of the Communities First Programme and refocusing of the Families First Programme.

Members then considered the report and raised the following matters in particular:

- Several Members reiterated the need to secure sufficient play opportunities for children on a county-wide basis. Previously, funding obtained from the anti-poverty programmes had required the Local Authority’s Play Development Team to focus its work on areas of multi-deprivation.
- Funding has been secured from the Families First Programme to continue to fund the Local Authority’s Play Development Team, although operating under slightly different criteria from 1 April 2018. However, concern was expressed on the lack of Welsh Government financial support for the statutory Play Sufficiency Duty.

- The Committee welcomed the funds provided by Welsh Government in Quarter 4 of the current financial year, and that notice of the funding has been provided earlier than in previous years. However, attached conditions required the money to be spent by the end of the financial year. As such, this condition prevented the money being spent on longer term community development work that could arise from the findings of the Council's Play Sufficiency Assessments and it was suggested that Welsh Government be requested to reconsider this condition.
- There was a continued need to promote Third Sector and community involvement in developing community-based play provision. Members noted the increased financial contributions from Town and Community Councils towards the delivery of playwork provision and requested further information on the type of play facilities that could be supported.
- The Service Manager – Prevention and Support commented that the Play Development Co-ordinator has been asked to invite representatives from Town and Community Councils to a Workshop to explore a variety of low cost and innovative ways in which communities could provide for children's opportunities for play. In addition, she agreed to provide Members of the Committee with information on the Open Access Play provision scheduled for 2018.
- It was noted that the use of school playing fields / facilities for community use would be at the discretion of individual School Governing bodies.

#### **AGREED –**

- (i) **That the Chair write to Huw Irranca-Davies AM on behalf of the Scrutiny Committee to express its on-going concern for the lack of Welsh Government financial support for the statutory Play Sufficiency Duty and asks that it reviews its position. While the Committee welcomes the funds that have been provided in Quarter 4 of the current financial year, and notes that notice of the funding has been provided earlier than in previous years, it asks Welsh Government to reconsider the funding conditions (which require funds to be spent by the end of the financial year) for future years to enable the funds to be spent on longer term community development work in line with the findings of Wrexham's play sufficiency assessments.**
- (ii) **That the letter be shared with the Lead Member for Youth Services and Anti-Poverty and he be asked to support and sign the letter.**
- (iii) **That the Scrutiny Committee recommends that the Lead Member for Youth and Anti-Poverty task the newly formed Play Sufficiency Partnership to explore models and options outlined in the report with relevant Lead Members and Heads of Department and that progress on this is reported in Wrexham's next Play Sufficiency Assessment, due for completion in April 2019.**

Councillor Derek Wright  
Chair