

# Member Report

## Football Foundation Playzones Programme



**Report to:** Cabinet  
**Report from:** Chris Moon  
**Portfolio:** Health & Wellbeing  
**Report Date:** 25 October 2024  
**Decision Type:** Key Policy  
**Council Priority**

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### HEADLINE POSITION

#### 1.0 Summary of report

1.1 To advise Cabinet of an external funding opportunity to develop new sport and physical activity facilities across the borough and to seek Cabinet approval (subject to successful funding application) for the procurement, and award of all contracts necessary to deliver the project.

#### 2.0 Recommendation

2.1 To accept the award of grant funding from the Football Foundation for the portfolio of Playzones and enter into any required funding agreements.

2.2 Approve the funding arrangements for the delivery of the PlayZones (including the provision by the Council of match funding) and approve any resultant variations to the capital programme.

2.3 Subject to the award of funding for any of the PlayZones authorise:

2.3.1 The procurement and award of contracts for the design and construction of each of the PlayZones, such contractors to be procured by the Council through the Football Foundations framework.

2.3.2 Approve any subsequent variations to any contract awarded for the delivery of the PlayZones as may be required to ensure their delivery in accordance with the requirements of the funding arrangements subject always to the funding being available to fund the works.,

## DETAILED PROPOSALS

### **3.0 What are the objectives of the report and how do they link to the Council's priorities**

#### **Background**

- 3.1 PlayZones are described by the Football Foundation (FF) as safe, inclusive, and accessible outdoor facilities that bring communities together to be active through recreational football and a range of other sports and activities. The programme aims to engage with local communities, to create modern activity spaces and help tackle inequalities in disadvantaged communities.
- 3.2 The difference between a PlayZone and a general multi use games area is that the PlayZone's location is targeted in areas of multiple deprivation, and the activity space is also bookable through an online booking platform and smart access booking system. When focusing on access to sport and physical activity opportunities there are four main groups facing the greatest inequalities which the new PlayZones will target and these are; lower socio-economic groups in areas of deprivation, women and girls, people with disabilities and people with long-term health conditions and ethnically diverse communities.
- 3.3 Once constructed, Playzones would be leased to an appropriately skilled tenant, responsible for overseeing all aspects of the PlayZone management, including maintenance and the implementation of a sinking fund for the replacement of the surface at the end of the lifespan.

### **4.0 What will PlayZones aim to achieve?**

- 4.1 Support of key priority groups - the investment will focus on increasing opportunities for the following groups to be more active, Women & Girls, Disabilities, People with long term Health Conditions, Diverse Ethnic Communities and Lower Socio-Economic Groups.
- 4.2 Enable equal access for girls - investment will ensure that every girl has the same opportunity, as every boy, to play football, both at their school and at a local club.
- 4.3 Targeted investment where it is needed most - the investment will be prioritised into communities that are most in need and where the greatest outcomes will be achieved.
- 4.4 Focus on community engagement - community engagement is fully embedded within the processes and ensuring local groups are involved in project development and activation.
- 4.5 People to 'move more' - supporting some of the most inactive Redcar and Cleveland residents to take the first steps to more active lifestyles.
- 4.6 As part of Redcar and Cleveland's application to the Football Foundation, the council is proposing to submit funding bids to develop 6 sites across the

borough. The sites are Eston, Grangetown, Guisborough, Marske, Dormanstown and Lakes Estate Redcar. Subject to wider external funding a seventh site in Saltburn will join the portfolio.

For a project to be viable and capable of success, the Council needs to evidence to the FF that any prospective tenants have the capacity, skills and willingness to be able to operate a PlayZone, they must also agree to the full repair and maintenance of sites and achieve a sinking fund to replace the surface at the end of its lifespan.

- 4.7 It is anticipated that each PlayZone will differ in terms of its design and construction costs, depending upon the ground conditions, and utility services. The FF have estimated that each PlayZone will cost between £235,000 - £275,000, which could realise a total investment of £1,650,000 if all six facilities were delivered. The FF is leading the capital investment programme, using investment from the Premier League, The Football Association (FA) and Sport England.
- 4.8 If applications are successful, the FF will provide up to 75% of financial support for the design and construction of each PlayZone approved with the Council required to contribute 25% match funding, either through its own, or other external sources. This could potentially be up to a maximum of £412,500 as an aggregate sum over all six projects.
- 4.9 As a requirement of the grant funding, the PlayZones must be delivered by the Council using the FF's framework of preferred bidders. However, once constructed the completed PlayZone will be leased to an appropriately skilled tenant operating within the PlayZone location. The leasing arrangements will ensure that the tenant will be responsible for overseeing all aspects of the PlayZone management including receiving income, managing expenditure, maintenance, the taking of bookings, reporting of performance and sports development as well as ensuring that any grant conditions specified by the FF are complied with. The Council will also reserve 'step in rights' in respect of the lease should any matter occur within the Playzone, which would place the Council at risk of claw back of any FF funding.

## **5.0 Current Position**

In order to progress with the application process, 'in principle' match funding of up to 25% per PlayZone has already been secured from internal and external funding. A seventh site in Saltburn will join as part of the Redcar and Cleveland portfolio subject to external funding being secured.

## **6.0 Reason for the Decision**

- 6.1 The development of PlayZones will continue to support the ambition of the council to enable and facilitate opportunities for everyone to be as physically active as they can be. PlayZones will also make a positive impact on strategic priorities around leisure and reduce inactivity.

## **7.0 Alternative Options**

- 7.1 The alternative is not to support the project, however in doing so, this would result in a reduction in the number of residents from areas of need, having access to local, modern and safe spaces to participate in sport and physical activity.

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

The FF have estimated that each PlayZone will cost between £235,000 - £275,000, which could realise a total investment of £1,650,000 (£1,925,000 if further external match funding is found for Saltburn) across Redcar and Cleveland. The FF will provide up to 75% of financial support for the construction of each PlayZone with the Council providing up to 25% match funding for the six confirmed sites as part of the portfolio.

- 8.1 Once constructed, full responsibility for the ongoing costs of operating and maintaining the PlayZones will be the responsibility of the tenants / operators in accordance with the terms of their individual leases.
- 8.2 PlayZones are relatively low maintenance facilities, and based on calculations from the Football Foundation, the annual cost, including the provision of a sinking fund, is estimated to be around £9000, based on a 3G pitch surface (which includes costs for the surface replacement at the end of the 10 year life span, regular deep clean of the surface required every 3-years by external contractors, lamp replacement - expected lifespan of luminaires at 10-years, utility costs and maintenance of the smart access system). When divided across 52-weeks of the year this equates to an income requirement of £173.07 per week or £24.70 per day.

## **9.0 Legal Implications**

The Council will ensure that any contracts awarded for the delivery of the project comply with the requirements of the Council's Procurement Procedure Rules and the Public Contract Regulations 2015 as appropriate.

## **10.0 Procurement Implications**

As a condition of accepting the funding, the capital works need to be undertaken by means of an exclusive Call off Contract, with the contractor appointed under a national Football Foundation Framework Agreement, that will include the Call off Terms and Conditions included in the Football Foundation Agreement. The FF have confirmed that the contractor for the north region is Cleveland Land Services.

## **11.0 Property Implications**

The completed facility will be leased to appropriately skilled organisation who will take over the operational running of the asset and will be responsible for all liabilities in respect of the site. The delegations sought within this report with regards to the granting of leases are consistent with the delegations already available under the Council's delegation scheme and are therefore sought for completeness only.

- 11.1 All facilities are new builds with adequate space on sites for PlayZone development with existing infrastructure in place for example floodlit pitches, leisure centres and wider sports club activity.

## **12.0 The Public**

Community consultation will underpin both the design of the PlayZones and the sports development plan once constructed. The project engagement plan will include consultation with a consortium of partners, local residents and prospective tenants who have the willingness to operate a PlayZone taking on the operational risk.

## **13.0 Risk Analysis**

- 13.1 The risks surrounding this plan are summarised below:

- 13.1.1 Failure to secure the allocated funds and other funds to support phased developments, within the tight timescales. This can be mitigated through early consultation with the FF and national governing bodies of sport (NGB's).
- 13.2 Failure to drive forward the necessary partnership working to ensure projects succeed. This will be mitigated through formalised agreements combined with ongoing consultation and discussions.
- 13.3 Failure to identify any ongoing maintenance requirements by the prospective tenant as they take over operation of the site. This can be mitigated by the development of a sustainable plan which Tenant's / operators will have to comply with to ensure the PlayZones are maintained once constructed.

## **14.0 Contact Officer**

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