



1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To inform officers, members and partners of the importance of play and to seek approval from Executive to formally adopt 'The Charter for Children's Play'.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 That, Executive approves the adoption of 'The Charter for Children's Play'

2.2 That, Executive acknowledges the value of Play and supports the local delivery initiatives as detailed in section 3 and 4 of this report.

3. **BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT**

3.1 The Charter for Children's Play sets out a vision for play, outlining the basic principles of what play means for children and what we should all do to promote their right to enjoy it.

It is underpinned by article 31 of the UN Convention on the rights of the child.

3.2 The charter outlines eight statements or principles that describe a vision of play:

1. Children have the right to play.
2. Every child needs time and space to play.
3. Adults should let children play.
4. Children should be able to play freely in their local areas.
5. Children value and benefit from staffed play provision.
6. Children's play is enriched by skilled play workers.
7. Children at school need time and space to play.
8. Children sometimes need extra support to enjoy their right to play.

Please refer to Appendix A for details.

3.3 The full charter outlines why play is so important in childhood, lists a number of other key documents and outlines supporting evidence:

- Play is the fundamental way that children enjoy their childhood. It is essential to their quality of life as children.
- Playing is fun: it is how children enjoy themselves.
- Play promotes children's development, learning, imagination, creativity and independence.
- Play can help to keep children healthy and active.
- Play allows children to experience and encounter boundaries, learning to assess and manage risk in their lives; both physical and social.
- Play helps children to understand the people and places in their lives, learn about their environment and develop their sense of community.
- Play allows children to find out about themselves, their abilities, their interests and the contribution they can make.

- 3.4 The charter has been adopted by the National Play England Council and therefore will become the underpinning document for Play England's work. Play England are encouraging many organisation's to adopt the charter.

HBBC would be the first Authority in Leicestershire to adopt this Charter, leading by example.

4. EMBEDDING THE CHARTER LOCALLY

- 4.1 This is a document that has underpinning values and principles that should be central to all the work we do as an authority with children, young people in relation to play and recreation, their development, enjoyment and self esteem.

- 4.2 The Locality Partnership Group for children and young people have endorsed this approach and fully support the proposed adoption of this Charter.

- 4.3 Children's play and the importance of play in their development and happiness is a cross cutting theme that is embedded within a number of local, regional and national strategies. As such there are a number of actions that will be undertaken to ensure that this is further embedded across the Council – as set out in detail in Appendix B

- 4.4 A selection of some of the key actions include:

- Further support and development of play in schools – for example calling break time Play time and developing training for lunch time supervisors
- Investigate funding opportunities for small targeted projects
- Link the value of Play to the Community Safety agenda and active lifestyles especially focusing on ASB
- Investigate the opportunity for Hinckley to host a regional play conference.
- Explore the opportunity to appoint a number of Play Rangers to work across the Borough

- 4.5 Once adopted as an authority this charter will be promoted as good practice and other organisations such as Parish Council's , voluntary sector and schools, will be encouraged to sign up and promote it's importance.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [PE]

Financial implications of adopting the Play Charter are minimal with the actions being delivered via existing budgets within the Children and Young People's Strategic Co-ordinators remit. External funding will be sought to compliment any new delivery.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [AB]

Adopting the Play Charter will not directly raise any legal implications, however there will be an presumption that the policy will be followed in Council activities.

7. CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

This Charter for Children's Play links directly to and complements the Borough Council's Corporate Plan. Particularly, "Strong and distinctive communities".

8. CONSULTATION

Consultation has taken place via the Hinckley and Bosworth Play Partnership, the Locality Partnership and most importantly the young people of the new voice model for Hinckley and Bosworth 'Youth For You' who are all very supportive.

9. RISK IMPLICATIONS

None

10. KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS

The Play Charter is a number of overarching key principles that are cross cutting in many strategic documents. The initial requirement is that the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council adopt these principles laid out within the charter, however it will be something that is encouraged and promoted throughout the locality with all work that focuses on children, young people and their families.

The principles have equality and access at their heart and are positive in supporting children's play and will help to provide equitable delivery across the Borough, including the rural areas, targeted delivery to priority communities and social groups.

11. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

There are a number of strategies, local, county and nationally that reference play and its importance.

This will be encompassed where appropriate within officer work priorities.

Background Papers: Appendix A copy of the Charter, Appendix B current and potential work streams

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