

**Agenda Item No:**

**Report to:** Charity Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 12th December 2011

**Report Title:** Seafront Play and Exercise Facilities

**Report By:** Virginia Gilbert  
Head of Amenities & Leisure

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### **Purpose of Report**

The report provides an update on progress towards delivering play and exercise facilities and equipment on seafront and seeks authority to tender the works.

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### **Recommendation(s)**

- 1. The report is noted and the programme of expenditure of £150k for seafront play and £25k for exercise equipment is approved.**

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### **Reasons for Recommendations**

The report serves to update the committee on the progress of the working group and seek approval for expenditure outlined in the Foreshore Trust Business Plan.

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## Introduction

1. There has been a long term aspiration to provide free to use play facilities at key locations on the seafront at Hastings & St Leonards and more recently to encourage physical activity for adults by providing fitness equipment and a way-marked exercise route. These have also featured as priorities for the Coastal User Group through their Seafront Action Plan.
2. The opportunity to develop these leisure facilities for all seafront users was presented in the Foreshore Trust Business Plan 2011-2016 at the Charity Committee meeting in September 2011 and provision has been made for their delivery in the spending plan for 2012/13.
3. It is felt that the provision of the equipment and a family friendly environment will encourage new user and greater access to Foreshore Trust land, stimulate physical activity and also support existing facilities for residents and visitors and provide economic benefit.

## Progress to date

4. A small working group of members and officers has been set up to guide and deliver the project. This has now met three times and has also carried out a number of site visits.
5. Some key principles have been agreed including:-
  - A primary site and main 'play area' should be located on the seafront to fill the gap in provision for the Town Centre and Old Town. This has been agreed in principle as the large eastern shrub/grass area between the Adventure Golf and Pelham Playa (see attached plan)
  - The main site would be supplemented by up to three clusters of 2/3 pieces of play equipment ideally at Warrior Square, Marina and towards West St Leonards (see attached plans)
  - The budget needs to be used as efficiently as possible to provide maximum facilities and equipment and that internal resources should be used wherever possible.
  - The project will be tendered as 'design & build' once the brief had been developed and consulted on.
  - The design of the facilities and equipment chosen should take account of the harsh seafront environment, the need to minimise maintenance tasks and costs and a desire to ensure the facilities are long lasting and sustainable.
  - Preference should be given to local suppliers/contractors through the tender evaluation process
6. A draft brief is currently being prepared to allow consultation on some of the key guidelines including a description of the sites/area, the age range of equipment,

themes/concepts, preferences for materials, maintenance, access etc (see attached)

7. The project will be managed internally and a draft programme has been prepared. It is anticipated that the brief will be advertised in December 2011, and following a process of further consultation and design that the equipment should be able to be installed by early summer 2012.
8. Early indications from the Planning Department are that planning consent would not be required for either the main play area or the three satellite sites.

## Consultation

9. Public consultation is being coordinated through the Play Development team including information on the Councils website and direct liaison with the Play Forum, local schools, nurseries, play providers and other organisations.
10. It has been suggested that the main facility would be aimed at younger children and that there is potential to provide equipment for older children/teenagers at Warrior Square.
11. It is also anticipated that draft designs will be displayed and available for comment at Priory Meadow and a specific presentation event at the Beach Retreat Cafe once these are available.
12. Shortlisted designs will also be presented to a workshop of local children for comment and evaluation.
13. The Coastal User Group have also be consulted on the locations and general principles and have agreed their support.

## Financial

14. A total budget of £150k has been allocated for the play area and equipment and an additional £25k for the adult fitness equipment and way marked exercise route.
15. It is hoped that the inspections and low level maintenance of the main site will be undertaken by Arnold Palmer Putting Courses Ltd (the operator of the Adventure Golf) who the trust have a similar management agreement with for the Pelham Playa and Volleyball court.
16. The additional clusters of play and fitness equipment will be inspected by the Council's Foreshore team as part of their general daily routine.
17. From talking to play and exercise equipment suppliers it is also possible that a maintenance agreement and robust manufacturing guarantee can also be built into the contract.

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## Wards Affected

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Castle, Central St. Leonards, Gensing, West St. Leonards

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### Area(s) Affected

Central Hastings, East Hastings, South St. Leonards

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### Policy Implications

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	No
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	No
Risk Management	No
Environmental Issues	No
Economic/Financial Implications	Yes
Human Rights Act	No
Organisational Consequences	No
Local People's Views	Yes

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### Background Information

Draft Brief for Play Spaces  
Draft locations 1-4

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### Officer to Contact

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The appended site plans could not be published on the Council's website because of the complex images that they contain. Copies may be obtained from Elaine Wood, Principal Committee Administrator, email [ewood@hastings.gov.uk](mailto:ewood@hastings.gov.uk) or tel. 01424 451717