

NEW ARK ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND AND CITY FARM: APPROVAL OF FUNDING

Councillor John Holdich, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University

July 2015

Deadline date: 31 August 2015

Cabinet portfolio holder: Responsible Director:	Councillor John Holdich, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University Wendi Ogle-Welbourn, Corporate Director, People and Communities
Is this a Key Decision?	NO
Is this decision eligible for call-in?	YES
Does this Public report have any annex that contains exempt information?	NO
Is this a project and if so has it been registered on Verto?	NO

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet Member is requested to authorise a grant to New Ark Adventure Playground and City Farm at an annual cost of £33,000 commencing 1 September 2015, for a three year period subject to annual review.

The Cabinet Member for Resources has been consulted on the CMDN and has made the following comment:

CMDN approved on 22 July 2015.

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 This report seeks the Cabinet Member approval to award an annual grant to New Ark Adventure Play Ground and City Farm of £33 000 commencing on 1 September 2015 for a three year period, subject to annual review.

2. PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 2.1 This report is for Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University to consider exercising delegated authority under paragraph 3.4.3 of Part 3 of the constitution in accordance with the terms of their portfolio at paragraph (o).

3. **TIMESCALE**

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If Yes, date for relevant Cabinet Meeting	N/A
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4. **DETAILS OF DECISION REQUIRED**

4.1 New Ark Adventure Playground and City Farm provides a unique facility in Peterborough, providing a service for children of all ages and background which focuses on children's development including health, safety and education. The facility includes a traditional adventure playground, an eco garden and a city farm. The facility provides a range of services:

- After school and holiday activities
- Children's play and care facilities, including pre school provision, to meet the needs of local families
- A City Farm, to give children opportunity to care for animals and learn to care for the environment
- The eco centre, which consists of a woodland area and a small orchard, where children can observe the life cycle of wild creatures. The eco centre helps children to learn about the natural world.
- Opportunity for parents and other local people, including those who are disabled and with special needs to contribute their skills as volunteers at the centre
- To provide a service accessible to all children, including those with special educational needs and /or disabilities, or those who need extra support.

4.2 The centre aims to:

- Ensure that children grow and flourish through a variety of projects and activities
- Increase self esteem and self confidence in participating children
- Consult with children and their parents/carers regularly to ensure that the provision meets their needs and wishes
- Encourage children and young people to participate in the planning and management of activities at the centre
- Provide support, care and information to all participating children and families
- Provide quality training for staff and volunteers, including safeguarding issues
- Attract additional funding to provide additional services for children and families
- Through the provision of outdoor play facilities, encourage healthy outdoor play and physical activity for all children
- Take appropriate action to challenge and reduce bullying and discrimination by children and young people attending the centre.

4.3 The centre has been Ofsted inspected and has achieved outstanding, indicating the level of quality provided and the positive impact that the services have for children. The centre provides opportunities for students and have supported the Duke of Edinburgh/Prince of Wales award, offered work experience for students in childcare amongst the young people supported. The Local Authority refer children to the centre for services that support their education and development of social skills. New Ark often supplements formal education provision where children are struggling in a traditional school setting.

4.4 The facility supports the Council's Objectives within its Sustainable Community Strategy.

4.5 The grant will enable New Ark Adventure Playground and City Farm to maintain the services they provide from the facility. The Centre does receive income from a range of sources including registration payments from parents for access to the playground, income for the pre school places, other grant funding (eg Children in Need) as well as a wide range

of fundraising events throughout the year. The centre is also very proactive in seeking opportunities offered through local businesses, and have accessed donations, support with fundraising and equipment loans from businesses, as well as practical help, for example to maintain the facility. Whilst there continues to be a pro active approach to funding the centre, without the grant from the Local Authority, the centre would not cover the operating costs of the provision.

- 4.6 A grant agreement will be entered into between the Council and New Ark Playground which will set out the grant conditions.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Local ward councillors will be consulted on this CMDN as part of the approval process.

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

- 6.1 The decision will secure the continued provision of the New Ark Adventure Play Ground and City Farm, which provides a unique facility for family in Peterborough achieved the aims outlined in paragraph 4.2.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS & ANY RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 7.1 The decision will secure the continued provision of the New Ark Adventure Play Ground and City Farm, which provides a unique facility for families in Peterborough.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 Do not provide any funding support – though the project does receive funding from other areas, including grants, fundraising and income from fees, this option was rejected as the grant enables the facility to maintain the level of services provided for some of our most vulnerable children and ensures sustainability for the future provision.

9. IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Approval of the grant funding will ensure the continuation of the New Ark Adventure Play Centre and City Farm.
- 9.2 Financial implications – Funding is in place for this provision.
- 9.3 Legal implications - The Council has the legal power to award the grant pursuant to the general power of competence contained in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. This power allows a local authority to do anything that individuals generally may do.

10. DECLARATIONS / CONFLICTS OF INTEREST & DISPENSATIONS GRANTED

None

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985) and The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

Sustainable Communities Strategy