

Alliance for Childhood London Forum
Wednesday 23rd October 2019, 3pm – 5pm at City Hall, London.

Minutes of Meeting

Present:

Elsa Rossi, Alliance for Childhood
Aya Husni Bey, Alliance for Childhood
Ben Peters, Education and Youth GLA
Chloe Darlington, Children England
Noori, Children England Policies and Communication
Megali Thomson, Great Ormond Street Hospital
Andy Russell (EasyPeasy App)
Pat Ingram, Wandsworth Early Help Division.

Nicky Garvon, City Play Policy.

Apologies for Absence:

Joanna Chambers, City Planner
Rae Whitton-Willow, Regeneration Good Growth Project: Education and Youth Team
Catherine Gabriel-Lovell, Events planner
Dinah Bornat ZCD Architects
Tim Gill, Independent Researcher
Eleanor Image Play Development Manager, Play Tower Hamlets

1. Main Theme: the Revised London Plan Play Policy; final draft was released on Monday 21st October 2019.

Introduced by Adrian Voce, President of the European Network for Child Friendly Cities.

Original Play Policy:

Protecting play spaces.

Making optimum provision.

Supplementary planning guidance (minimum standard 10m² per residential and visiting child).

Qualitative standard is sufficient, and adequate. Keen for the standard to remain and can be revised as well as brought forward in order to assure it does not disappear.

Retention of recommendation – for each Borough to have a local play strategy.

HIGH PROFILE ADDITION:

No segregation of play spaces by economic tenure status.

What was discussed:

3.58 Policy S4

The Mayor's guide to developing a play strategy in 2008.

Government changed in 2010 and play strategy was lost.

Planning decisions included:

Safer routes to school.

Home zones.

Play streets.

Stringent traffic restrictions

Plan to make England the best place in the world for children to play.

£200 million was spent on improving play areas.

Longer term measures to change planning culture never had a chance to come to fruition.

Questions and comments

Public policy gets renewed without any assessment. Most London authorities do not have a play assessment in place.

Is the new London plan more or less child friendly than the first London plan?

How impactful is the policy?

How much impact the plan has on shaping children's play?

How to monitor and evaluate the impact of the policy?

How do we know the existing London plan has worked unless we have someone out there monitoring the impact?

Assessing and auditing how children play in the area?

As we move away from the austerity era.

The way of addressing spacial planning is commendable.

3.59 Relevance to public health agenda.

Focus was on food, diet, nutrition seen to be the biggest changes needed to be made to obesity epidemic. Decrease in play has become a recognised factor. Not just increase sport activities. Children play all the time and exercise themselves under their own initiative, the requirements are the need for space and permission.

Parents need to have the confidence that the outdoor spaces their children play in are safe.

Depends on location and neighbourhood etc.

Focus has been on SATs and environmental learning rather than open play, the biggest untapped resource is children's own energy which needs political will.

Need to take away domination of motor vehicles e.g. Rue Neuve, Brussels City Centre.

There is an emphasis on play provision:

Playgrounds.

After school clubs.

Holiday play schemes.

What is required is formal play provision.

Nicky Gavron enters:

10m² is now set as standard and is going into the London plan for all on housing estates. The reason being that there is not enough play space for children.

The reason there is not enough play space for children is because the current the population calculator measures 1 child per 2 bedroom flat, which is unrealistic.

Supplementary Planning Guidance, which this forum has the chance to advocate.

Design section: Needs surveillance and children are protected.

Family housing to be on ground floor.

Benchmark standard is reasonable.

Independent mobility.

Neighbourhood play.

SPG Getting child calculator right.

Rachel Rumi is on the planning team in charge of SPG.

Knife Crime Crisis

Cut in services.

Less play space of multi-sport ball games for young to 18 year olds.

Hand/eye coordination is not as developed as it should be.
Lost 40% of playing fields since 1990.

Next Steps:

Report of inspectors to come in and Mayor is to respond with a letter.

Ministry of Housing, Ministry of Transport, either agree or disagree.

To be assessed in February for debate, however amendments cannot be made. A vote is to be made on the agenda as a whole. Turned down or accepted. Suggestion can be taken on board by the Mayor's team.

Housing figures are not sound, they are predicted on assumptions of small sites so inspection does not see a sound review by Mayor of the green belt.

Certain review / partial review

Broader aspects of child friendly London.

Schools loss of green space.

To be regulatory law.

Population calculator determines how many children which determines how much play space.

Then comes; Implementation and follow up.

Strategic housing market suggestion:

Scenario – Affordable housing section, shared ownership, Rental association.

Providing enough family housing.

Summed up as Measures – Evaluation - impact

The Plan will come up for review as part of the Comprehensive spending review

It's future will partly depend on Elections and the DfE.

Question

Technology affects the amount of time children have to play in the facilities provided as the addictive nature of gaming has taken over 'the biggest untapped resource, which is children's own energy'. Gaming is designed to keep gamers plugged in which is leading to addiction. There are games now where parents ask their children to stop playing and their children cannot as they would end the game completely between their friend/s playing on the other side of the line. Suggestion on whether a cap can be introduced to apply regulation on game design to consider and factor in these insights?

Response:

Information Commission Office

White Paper Online Harms.

London College of Economics (LCE), Children's Rights in the Digital Age.

Bernardo's

2. European Network of Child Friendly Cities (ENCFC)

The ENCFC is holding a conference hosted by the City of Bristol at Bristol City Hall from 27th to 29th November. See the website playfulplanet.org.uk for details.

3. Andy, App developer & digital programme developer for EasyPeasy App. Islington, Camden, Newham made a presentation on the use of EasyPeasy App

Here is a link to the slide show.

Social mobility policy
Play social mobility metrics.

The App can be used for play:
In Various Settings such as nurseries
When Out & About

It supports:
Play at home
parents and carers interface.
Children Develop social and emotional skills.
Playful moments for families and children.

85% brain develops takes place before the age of 5 years.

From research in Oxford by Kathy Silva.

Easy Peasy provide Practitioner webinar training.

Functionality –

Wellcome Trust
Create games and activities
Pedagogy – play and learning role.
Modelled by parents and carers, aunts, uncles etc.

Easy to difficult.

How am I seeing progress?
Longer attention etc.

App is 3 years old, released 2 years ago.
Used by 32,000+ families, and recorded 478,000+ moments of play (on slides).

Oxford and Durham Universities measuring impact of play.

Academically measuring the effect intervention has had?
Paying attention,
following Instruction & concepts,
cognitive self-regulation,
Language.

Measuring standards?
Warmth,
Parents confidence in setting up games.

Other things happening along same lines
Gross learning Development (GLD)
Tiny Happy People BBC
Hungry Little Minds (Early Years, early Language) – the execution of this method was debated.