

Regional Playground Strategy

Is there a regional strategy/money that determines playground upgrades and renewal? This is in the remit of local boards, but is there a regional approach? (Councillor Hulse was interviewed about playground inequity.)

See attached memo.

Memorandum

12 September 2019

To: Councillor Efeso Collins

Subject: *Tākaro – Investing in Play*

From: Paul Marriott-Lloyd, Senior Policy Manager, Parks and Recreation Policy

Purpose

1. To update you on the development of the council's play investment plan.

Key messages

- Auckland Council does not have a regional strategy for investment in play.
- Each local board is responsible for planning for play provision in its local area, and investment of the funds allocated to it by the governing body.
- Major sources of funding include growth funding (development contributions) and renewals funding.
- Staff are currently developing a regional plan to inform future investment in play over the next 20 years.
- Subject to approval by the governing body, public consultation on the draft plan will take place early in the new council term.

Context

2. Auckland Council does not currently have regional strategy for how it supports future investment in play. Each local board is responsible for play provision within its own local area.
3. Funding is allocated to local boards through the Long-term Plan and Annual Plan:
 - a. Renewal of older play spaces is funded through depreciation, with money set aside overtime. This must be spent within the same local board area as the depreciated asset.
 - b. Provision of new play spaces is funded from development contributions. Such funding is available to areas experiencing growth.
4. Some local boards choose to fund additional or out-of-cycle improvements to local play provision from their discretionary budgets.

Creating a regional investment strategy

5. Council is currently developing a regional play investment plan, *Tākaro - Investing in play*.
6. The plan will cover:
 - a. all types of public outdoor play, including in city parks, at the beach or in the bush, on the streets and in civic spaces.
 - b. all capital expenditure on play assets, and all operational expenditure on play services, including play programmes and other relevant open space activation.

7. The purpose of plan is to:
 - a. define a council-wide vision for play
 - b. describe the public value of play and play space
 - c. describe the high-level outcomes sought from investment over the next 20 years
 - d. describe the role of council in the delivery of play
 - e. establish principles to inform planning and high-level resource allocation
 - f. outline the range of play experiences council may provide
 - g. provide guidance on how, where and what the council will invest in
8. The intended audience for the plan includes decision-makers, developers, technical consultants, philanthropic donors and the wider community.

Process to date

9. Staff first sought public input on creation of a regional plan in June 2017. The purpose of this consultation was to seek support for the creation of regional approach to play, highlight issues and opportunities and determine what a potential plan might include.
10. In February 2018, staff reported to the governing body on the results of the public consultation.
11. Overall, public feedback supported the creation of a regional investment plan. Key feedback included:
 - a. that future investment should cater to people of all ages and abilities
 - b. that the council should invest in a broader range of play experiences, including more challenging, unstructured forms of play, such as nature play
 - c. that investment should support equity of outcomes
 - d. that the council should use community partnerships to extend the play network
 - e. that the council should use data to inform future investment
12. The governing body endorsed the feedback report as a basis to commence development of a regional plan.
13. Work on the draft plan is progressing. No formal decisions have been taken.

Next steps

14. Staff will conclude work on the draft plan over the coming months.
15. Staff will report to the Environment and Community Committee (or equivalent) early in the new council term to seek approval to publicly consult on the draft plan.