

**Title of meeting:** Full Cabinet Meeting

**Date of meeting:** 4<sup>th</sup> February 2020

**Subject:** Play Out Portsmouth - citywide rollout

**Report by:** Tristan Samuels - Director of Regeneration

**Wards affected:** All

**Key decision:** No

**Full Council decision:** No

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**1. Purpose of report**



To highlight the Play Out Pompey pilot play streets scheme and to seek approval to make the scheme available citywide.

## **2. Recommendations**

**It is recommended that the Cabinet approves:**

- 2.1 The creation of the community led, Portsmouth City Council initiated Play Streets Scheme that includes:**
  - 2.1.1 The creation of supporting documents and an application forms, which will be available to all Portsmouth residents on the Portsmouth City Council website;**
  - 2.1.2 The creation and support of a resident-led Play Out Pompey Community Group to support the set-up of new play streets;**
  - 2.1.3 The purchase and storage of appropriate road closure and diversion signage.**

## **3. Background**

- 3.1** A number of Local Highway Authorities have been running successful play street schemes for many years. The widely accepted benefits of such schemes are:
  - Allowing children to play outside in a safe environment
  - Allow children and adults to socialise with neighbours
  - Increase cycling and scooting for leisure and therefore increase active travel rates to school or work
  - Increase physical activity and therefore reduce obesity
  - To improve physical and mental wellbeing
  - To increase road safety awareness through education and an understanding of when it is safe to play in the road and when it isn't

All of these benefits are pertinent to the current aims of Portsmouth City Council. More details on Play Streets can be found here: <https://playingout.net/why/>

- 3.2** The Play Out Pompey Scheme has been trialled successfully twice in the city on Francis Avenue in Southsea. The trial was identified from councillor interaction with residents; officers carrying out research on similar successful projects, and active community participation in the area.
- 3.3** The Play Out Pompey Scheme will be available to businesses, community groups and residents living or working on all unclassified roads in Portsmouth. Classified road and unclassified roads are defined under Section 12 of the Highways Act 1980 and unclassified roads are wholly maintained by the local authority or their appointed agent.

- 3.4 Under new guidance from the Department for Transport, an unclassified road can be closed for the purpose of a Play Street under Section 16 of the Road Traffic (Special Events) 1994. This does not require advertisement in a local newspaper and can be advertised online and on street reducing the financial cost to organisers.
- 3.5 Portsmouth City Council will create a suite of documents to assist any applicants and these will all be available on the website. They will include:
- A step by step manual to running Play Out Pompey sessions on street
  - Advice on risk assessments, communications, resident consultation, event briefings
  - Advice on activities to do while the road is closed
- 3.6 Portsmouth City Council will offer technical advice and advertisement of the Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTRO) and approve the diversion plan for the road closure. This will include the liaison with the Highways Maintenance contractors over requested closure dates and any planned roadworks that may affect the closure.
- 3.7 The development of the documents will be carried out in conjunction with the standard templates on [www.playingout.net](http://www.playingout.net) and any enquiries will be dealt with as business as usual.
- 3.8 There will need to be investment in two sets of road closure and diversion signs in the first instance, and it is anticipated that these will be funded from Corporate Sponsorship or the pre-approved allocation for the Safer Travel Team.
- 3.9 Once Play Out Pompey is established and gaining momentum, the aim is to branch out into School Street closures; whereby roads outside schools are closed to allow pupils and parents to actively travel to and from school and to enable children to play out in a safe environment outside their school.
- 3.10 The lessons learned from the Play Streets will provide valuable analysis for the School Streets project and will provide data and anecdotal evidence to assist with parents/carers needing to complete an onward journey.
- 3.11 The aim is that by establishing play streets initially, prioritising children's play and active travel will become a social "norm". The subsequent introduction of school streets will then be a natural progression.



#### 4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 The Transport service have undertaken a pilot of the Play Out Pompey scheme in conjunction with an event organiser. Two events have taken place on Francis Avenue; one in July 2019 and one in September 2019.
- 4.2 The evaluation of the pilot scheme has been very positive. Of the 27 households who returned evaluation forms, 25 fully supported the scheme. Only material objections (i.e. a serious detrimental effect to a person or their livelihood) would be a cause to consider not going ahead with a play street and none of the questionnaires returned outlined such an issue.
- 4.3 A sample of the evaluation form comments are as follows:
- A lot of planning clearly went into this event to ensure the safety of children
  - Can't wait for the next one!
  - Wish it could have been longer
  - It's important for adults to socialise and for the youngsters to own the event
  - We met our neighbours from 2 doors down for the first time!
  - It was a very special day, I thought it was lovely. Bring on more
  - I have lived here for 27 years and only just spoken to neighbours from across the road!
  - Strongly support the play event, hope they continue
  - Worth organising another street event in the future. I believe this would be much enjoyed by other streets/roads in Portsmouth
  - Happy to do it again and again, like that event
  - When is the next one?
  - My child made new friends at that event

- My children are so happy
- We want more events like this because we know our neighbours now
- Great idea - created a real bond
- More please
- We thoroughly enjoyed it and would support it happening again

## **5. Equality impact assessment**

5.1 IIA accompanies this document.

## **6. Legal implications**

6.1 There is a power under section 29 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA) to close roads to create play street but there is a legal requirement to advertise orders both before and after the order is made.

6.2 The Department of Transport has encouraged the use of the powers under section 16A of the RTRA to grant applications for closures for special events as an alternative. As there is no requirement to advertise the order such applications are less expensive.

6.3 The consent of the Secretary of State will have to be obtained for repeat special event closures in any one calendar year in the same way that the Council currently does for annual events. The Department of Transport are simplifying the procedures for making such applications to encourage the use of Play Out schemes and have produced helpful guidelines to follow.

6.4 When considering such applications for road closures implementing Play Out schemes the Council should balance the needs of those benefitting from the closure with appropriate vehicular access for residents and their visitors. Suitable alternative routes must always be available for through traffic."

## **7. Director of Finance's comments**

7.1 The initial purchase of the road and diversion signs is estimated to cost in the region of £600. This will be funded from the Off Street Parking Reserve.

7.2 The creation of supporting documents, application forms and the support of a resident-led Play Out Pompey Community Group will be met from existing Cash Limited Resources.

7.3 There may be additional costs associated with different events, it's anticipated that these will be funded externally as and when they arise.

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Signed by:  
Tristan Samuels - Director of Regeneration

**Appendices:**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Play Streets Reports 2019	file:///W:\TES\RSAT\Road%20Safety\Campaigns\Play%20Streets\Play%20Streets%20Report%202019.docx

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by ..... on .....

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Signed by:  
Councillor Lynne Stagg - Cabinet Member for Traffic and Transportation