**FAIR OAK & HORTON HEATH PARISH COUNCIL PLAY STRATEGY**

**COMMISSIONING BRIEF**

1. **Introduction**

Fair Oak & Horton Heath Parish Council is seeking to commission a partner to develop a comprehensive Play Strategy that will guide future play provision within the Parish. As a growing community undergoing continued development, the Parish Council requires a strategy that is evidence-based, forward-looking, and reflects the aspirations of residents while prioritising sustainability and longevity. The strategy will serve as a key tool for the Parish Council to advocate for appropriate play provision with the Borough Council, especially when negotiating Section 106 agreements.

The strategy should provide a framework for future play provision, highlight design principles, identify existing assets and potential improvements (including a recently decommissioned play area at Upper Barn Copse), and demonstrate the Council’s approach to transparency and resident engagement.

It should emphasize intergenerational play, free play, nature-based activities, and inclusive play opportunities for all ages, genders, and abilities.

1. **Aim of the Project**

The goal of this project is to create a participatory Play Strategy that incorporates resident engagement to build on existing assets and establish an aspirational vision for future play provision in Fair Oak & Horton Heath.

1. **Purpose of the Play Strategy**

The Play Strategy will be developed through a participatory process, including workshops and surveys, to ensure it is rooted in community input and reflects local needs. The strategy should encompass the following areas:

* **Growth of the Area and Play Provision Needs:** Assess the impact of population growth and development on current and future play needs.
* **Current Play Provision:** Evaluate the location, quality, and life expectancy of existing play areas (using information held by the Council)
* **Changing and Future Play Needs:** Use data from workshops to understand how children's play needs are evolving and to anticipate future trends.
* **Wider Community Infrastructure:** Consider public open spaces, community facilities, and sports provision that contribute to health and wellbeing.
* **Sustainability:** Ensure that all recommendations consider environmental sustainability, durability of materials, and community stewardship as well as raising awareness of nature conversation in recognising its value in supporting wellbeing.

1. **Project Scope**

The commissioned partner will:

* Conduct a **mixed-method engagement process**, combining desktop research, surveys, and workshops to gather a broad range of data.
* Facilitate at least **30-50 participants in workshop(s)**, engage the wider community through a full resident survey, and seek input from three local schools and local preschools.
* Collaborate with key **stakeholders**, including young people, adults, community groups, local businesses, and the Borough Council.
* Analyse **conflicts**, such as the recent decommissioning of the Upper Barn Copse play area, and address community concerns in the strategy.

1. **Key Deliverables**

The commissioned partner is expected to produce the following:

* **A detailed Play Strategy document** covering the identified themes and areas of focus, supported by quantitative and qualitative data from the engagement process.
* **An evidence-based assessment** of the current play provision and the needs of the community, including mapping of existing assets and recommendations for enhancement.
* **Design principles and guidelines** for future play spaces, incorporating best practices in play area development, sustainability, and inclusivity.
* **A summary of engagement findings**, demonstrating how resident input shaped the strategy.
* **Recommendations for intergenerational and nature-based play opportunities**, ensuring inclusive access across all age groups and abilities.

1. **Timeline**

The project will be delivered according to the following schedule:

* **December 2024:** Submission of bids.
* **January 2025:** Appointment of the commissioned partner.
* **April 2025:** Completion and submission of the final Play Strategy report.

1. **Stakeholder Engagement**

The strategy will be co-created with a diverse range of stakeholders, including:

* **Residents** (adults and children)
* **Local schools** (input from three schools)
* **Community groups** and organisations
* **Relevant Borough Council Officers**

The engagement process will include targeted workshops, surveys, and opportunities for feedback, ensuring the final strategy is representative of community aspirations and needs.

1. **Budget**

The budget allocated for the development of the Play Strategy is up to £20,000. This budget should cover all aspects of the project, including engagement activities, report production, and any associated expenses.

1. **Potential Conflicts and Considerations**

The recent decommissioning of the play area at Upper Barn Copse may present conflicts or concerns from residents. Existing survey data and workshop findings related to this site will be provided to inform the strategy.

1. **Submission Requirements**

Bids should include

:

* **A detailed proposal** outlining the approach, methodology, and proposed timeline for delivering the strategy.
* **Relevant experience and examples** of previous work on similar projects.
* **A breakdown of costs** within the budget, including fees, engagement expenses, and any other costs.
* **Details of requirements/input** from the Parish Council
* **Details of the project team**, including key personnel and their roles.

**Submission Deadline:** Proposals should be submitted by **2 December 2025 at 9.00am**

**Contact Information:** For further information or to submit a proposal, please contact: Melanie Stephens, [clerk@fairoak-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@fairoak-pc.gov.uk)