

TORBAY COUNCIL

Report No: **Env/60/03**

Title: **Victoria Park Skate Park**

To: Executive

on 29th May 2003

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Following the results of the consultation with skate park users and local residents, approval is being sought for the installation of new skateboard equipment in the disused tennis court at Victoria Park, Paignton.

2. Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The recommendations are in line with objective 1.2.2.4 of the Torbay Strategy; working in partnership, with the Groundwork Trust to develop local community projects including skate parks for each of the towns.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 That following the public consultation completed in April 2003, new skateboard equipment as identified by the Skate Boarders Community group be installed on the disused tennis court at Victoria Park, Paignton.
- 3.2 To approve that the recommended supplier is commissioned to manufacture the skateboard equipment and install in the disused tennis court at Victoria Park, Paignton.
- 3.3 That the funding raised for this project is accepted and that all sponsors are given accreditation on the completed skate board park.
- 3.4 That the Council works with the local Skate Park Management Committee made up of users of the skate park, the Groundwork Trust, the police and youth workers, to enable the facility to be proactively managed on a day to day basis.

4. Reason for Recommendation

- 4.1 To provide much needed activities for young people in the Paignton area and to provide good quality facilities to deter skaters from using informal sites such as the sea front and adjacent car park.
- 4.2 To provide new robust and a variety of challenging equipment at the site of the previous Skate Park at the disused tennis courts in Victoria Park.
- 4.3 To allow the users to take ownership and responsibility for the management of the facilities in conjunction with Parks Services staff, the police and Community Workers.

5. Background

- 5.1 The first Skate Park was installed at Victoria Park in a disused tennis court in 1998. The skate park equipment consisted of a single open framed wooden half pipe structure with very limited in it function. The equipment was sized to attract the most experienced skaters, which meant that those not completely confident of this type of ramp were unable to use the park. This resulted in less confident skaters using inappropriate sites such as the seafront, local car parks and Oldway Mansion grounds.

It had been envisaged that the remaining area which was left with a tarmac surface would be utilised for future 'street type' equipment. This extra equipment was never installed.

- 5.2 The design of the open framed half pipe was very exposed and therefore subject to vandalism, and about a year later a series of incidents occurred requiring major repairs to take place to the structure. The dual use of the facility provided for BMX users and skaters with the wooden surface was prone to damage on a regular basis. Finally after two arson attacks on the facilities and serious malicious damage not caused by the users, the Skate Park was closed and the skate ramp removed completely. This was finally removed in the spring of 2001.
- 5.3 The Groundwork Trust started working with a local group of young people back in the summer of 2001, who were interested in replacing the Skate Park by raising funding for new equipment themselves. This group based at the Garage in Paignton produced a business plan and raised some funding from Marks and Spencers and the police. Torbay Council also raised funding on behalf of the group from the Institute of Waste Management and from the Council's parks development budget. A total of £23,000 was raised for new equipment by February 2003.
- 5.4 On 27th March 2003 the group met at the Garage and agreed the equipment they wanted to purchase. Quotes and design options were then bought by Council officers and the best option was put out to consultation with local residents, skaters and BMX'ers.
- 5.5 The consultation period started on 8th April with a letter being sent to the residents living close to the facility, followed by a general announcement in the press. Displays and information on how to comment were also placed in Paignton Library, The Garage and the Vert skate shop in Paignton.
- 5.6 The Parks Service, Groundwork and the Police ran a drop in consultation Road Show in Victoria Park on Saturday 26th April to seek views from skater boarders, BMX'ers and local residents. Over 50 people filled in questionnaires during the Road Show and shared their views with team.

6 Consultation

- 6.1 The results of the consultation under taken through questionnaires are as follows:

Number of questionnaires filled out	54
Age Range	
Under 16	37%
Aged 16-25	13%
Aged 25-50	20%
Over 50	25%
None given	5%
% who were skate park users	27%
% who were local resident	54%
% who were both local and users	16%
% who classed themselves as other	3%
Those who considered the skate park was in the right location	93%

Those who thought the Skate Park was not in the right location suggested siting it at Clennon Valley and St Michael's Road quarry

Concerns on the impact of installation

Were:

Personal Safety	1%
Fear of intimidation	3%
Behaviour of the young people	3%

We asked those questioned what impact they felt there would be as a result of installing new skate park equipment in Victoria Park, the result were:

Excessive Noise	3%
Increase in accidents	11%
More litter	25%
Vandalism/anti social behaviour	14%
Gave young people something to do	79%
Would keep young people out of trouble	72%
Would keep skate boards off streets /car parks	77%
Make young people feel part of community	79%

42% of those questioned thought they had been adequately consulted with 24% saying word of mouth was the way they found out about the proposals.

35% of those questioned believe they would be directly affected by the introduction of the Skate park.

6.2 Other comments were received by post and email and included a letter in support of the equipment design and siting, and letters from two local residents who supported the proposals in principal but thought a charge should be levied to pay for running costs, that the site should have adequate insurance, and parents be encourage to help supervise the youngsters using the park. The local people also thought that unless a roof was provided and the area was illuminated, skateboards would still use the car park. A full copy of the consultation is attached in appendix 1.

6.2 The conclusion from the consultation undertaken by Torbay Council and Groundwork is that in the main both skate boarders and local residents are in favour of the proposals and feel this will help alleviate problems of skaters using inappropriate sites such as local car parks and the seafront.

7. Skate Park Design, Equipment and Future Management of the Facility

7.1 In choosing the equipment and manufacturer the main emphasis has been given to noise reduction, reducing vandalism and low maintenance design. Therefore wooden and metal structures were discounted at an early stage as were open framed structures which had resulted in major vandalism in the previous Skate Park.

7.2 Three experienced companies were asked to quote for the equipment list drawn up by the Skate Park Management Committee, these were:

Nulite Leisure
NM Promotions Ltd
Eibe

The recommended design and type of equipment proposed, which is also the lowest quotation price was received from Eibe. The cost of providing the equipment, installation, with a five-year equipment guarantee is £23,000 plus vat.

It is therefore recommended that this company be appointed as the skate board manufacturer and supplier.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 The total cost of the project is £26,000, with £3,000 relating to the tennis court surface, which was completed in February 2003. This is part of the Council's contribution to the skate park provision. The remaining funding for the project was raised by the Groundwork Trust, the Skate Park Management Committee and by Torbay Council through sponsorship.
- 7.2 The cost of maintenance of the equipment is minimal with the five-year guarantee on all the structure, surface and component parts. The Park Attendant will continue to check the skate park daily for faults in the equipment, to remove any rubbish, and unlock the facility. The closing of the Skate Park each day will be undertaken by the Skate Park Management Committee, in consultation with youth workers. There will be no additional revenue funding required for the provision of this service or for the daily checks.

8. Future Management of the Facility

- 8.1 The facility will be managed by the Council in conjunction with the Skate Park Management Committee and the Groundwork Trust. Community Education's Youth Workers will also provide supervised sessions at the skate park, working with younger less experienced skaters. Members of the Skate Park Management Committee will also provide master classes for beginners and improvers at the skate facility.

7. Alternative Option (if any)

- 7.1 Not to replace the skate board equipment at the disused tennis courts at Victoria Park, Paignton.
- 7.2 The Skate Park Management Committee has raised most of the funding for the Skate Park themselves with the support of the Police and the Groundwork Trust. It is therefore provided at no additional cost to the Council. The only service provided by the council is the checking of the equipment and the park opening, which will fit into existing operations.
- 7.3 Extensive consultation has taken place, and most of the local residents support the provision of a Skate Park at Victoria Park Paignton.

Mike Yeo
Acting Director of Environment

Contact Officer: Sue Cheriton
Extension: 7972

IMPLICATIONS, CONSULTATION AND OTHER INFORMATION

Part 1

These sections may be completed by the Report author but must be agreed by named officers in the Legal, Finance, Human Resources and Property Divisions. If these are not completed and agreed the Report will not be included on the agenda.

Does the proposal have implications for the following issues?

Insert name of responsible officer

Legal (including Human Rights)	None	
Financial – Revenue	None	
Financial – Capital Plan	None	
Human resources (including equal opportunities)		
Property	None	

Part 2

These sections must be completed by the author of the Report.

Does the proposal have implications for the following issues?		
Please give details as appropriate		
Sustainability	Yes or No	No
Crime and Disorder	Yes or No	Yes – the provision of the skate park is in response to problems on the seafront and in the car park at Paignton. The police have been involved in developing this project
*OfSTED Post Inspection Action Plan	Yes or No	N/A
*Social Services Action Plan	Yes or No	N/A
*Change Management Plan	Yes or No	N/A

** not applicable to reports to Licensing, Development Control and Area Development Committees*

Part 3

These sections must be completed by the author of the Report.

Does the proposal have implications for the following Directorates? If so, please inform the relevant Director.		
Please give details as appropriate		
Chief Executive/Corporate Services	Yes or No	No
Education Services	Yes or No	Yes – additional support is being given by the Community Education unit.
Environment Services	Yes or No	Yes – Future maintenance of the Skate Park.
Social Services	Yes or No	No
Strategic Services	Yes or No	No

Part 4

Is the proposal contrary to or does it propose amendment to the Policy Framework or contrary to (or not wholly in accordance with) the Council's budget?	Yes Fill in Box 1	No Fill in Box 2
<p>1. Details of the nature and extent of consultation with stakeholders and relevant select committees.</p> <p>The Skate Park Proposals have been widely consulted on, the results are included in the main body of the report.</p>		
<p>2. Details and outcome of consultation, as appropriate.</p> <p>Results of public consultation are included in the main body of the report and are in appendix 1.</p>		

Part 5

Is the proposal a Key Decision in relation to an Executive function?	Yes	Reference Number	No

Part 6

Wards Roundham with Hyde

Appendices
Appendix 1 Results of the Public Survey – 26th April 2003

Documents available in Members' Room

Background Papers:
The following documents/files were used to compile this report: