

CABINET: 4 FEBRUARY 2004

FAWLEY: PROVISION OF SKATEBOARD FACILITY

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Fawley Parish Council has made a request for a contribution towards the funding of a skatepark, using developers' contributions.

2. THE SCHEME

- 2.1 The site is Gang Warily, adjacent to the Recreation Centre. This site is owned by the Parish Council and is their primary open space facility. It has been the subject of investment with developer's contributions in the provision of BMX facilities.
- 2.2 There has been a very significant effort been put in by the Parish to work with local young people and to research the provision of these facilities. There is no other facility in the town and the need for facilities for young people is supported by a wide range of agencies that are working together in the town and investing in various aspects of provision for young people.
- 2.3 This site is well located for use by young people – being accessible from the village but not surrounded by housing. Also there is very substantial use of the site already.
- 2.4 There is a long standing interest in such a provision, with the first evidence of requests going back to 1997. More recently, Twenty seven young people and parents, who were confirming their request for a Skate Park, attended the Council Meeting held on 10 December 2001. Following this, a working party was set up to produce a scheme. Advice was sought from specialist companies and other skatepark providers. The skaters themselves started to raise funds towards the project. The mobile ramps that are used as part of the Saturday Club are very popular, indeed the most popular event by far.
- 2.5 Given the need and the length of time it has taken, the Parish have implemented the project, in the anticipation of partnership support towards this target group.

3. ASSESSMENT

- 3.1 Officers suggest that the scheme be supported given the evident need and the concerted efforts of the Parish Council to effectively research the project. In addition, as is required by the guidelines for developers'

contributions schemes, comments of the Planning Service and Leisure Service are set out below:

The Planning Service comments are: -

- (a) Is the proposed scheme directly related to the development which it proposes to serve?

Yes, it is centrally located to be of benefit to development area.

- (b) Does the need for the scheme arise from the development and is it relevant to it?

Yes, the need arises substantially from the demands of the adjoining housing areas.

- (c) Does the scheme conform to the adopted Local Plan and Development Briefs for the areas and fall within the terms of the S106 Agreement?

Yes, this is an important open space identified in the Local Plan to provide for a variety of activities.

The Leisure Services comments are:-

- (a) Can the scheme be shown to meet the needs of the people in the development area?

Yes, this provision will meet needs in the community that are not provided for at the moment.

- (b) Does the scheme complement or improve existing or planned facilities in the catchment?

Yes, there is no other provision like it locally and it is part of the agreed schedule of open space provision.

- (c) Can the request be accommodated within the funds available, given the known and anticipated requirements within the area for which contributions are held?

Yes, funds are retained for other schemes and it is still within the initial allocation within the schedule. Compared to the available funds within Fawley, this is a significant draw down. The Parish Council understands this but is promoting the scheme as a high priority, given the needs of young people.

- (d) Is the proportion of funding from contributions reasonable, given the nature of the scheme?

Yes, the scheme will meet needs across the area and a significant population of young people.

- (e) Is there financial need on behalf of the promoter of the scheme?

Yes. The Parish have co-ordinated extensive fundraising which has helped reduce the call down on funds considerably. They will also fund the maintenance costs.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The budget for the scheme is £27,500. As well as the Parish Council, contributors to the scheme include Hampshire Constabulary, Dibden Allotments Charity, Fawley Youth and Community Group, Laporte Chemicals, New Forest Sports Council, Shanks and also the skaters themselves have undertaken fundraising.
- 4.2 With this extent of third party funding, the amount sought is £12,120. There are sufficient funds available to meet the award if the recommendation is agreed. The total available is limited in the Parish (£30,000) but the Parish see this as a key scheme and an affordable one.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The scheme makes better use of an existing public open space, which is already in active use by local young people. There can be disturbance issues when young people use facilities like this but this site is well suited given its location and existing use. This reduces the level of potential conflict and makes it also more suitable for the needs of the young people for whom it is intended.
- 5.2 With recent events elsewhere in the District, there is now an heightened awareness about the placement of such facilities. This site has been visited in this respect and it has a number of positive aspects to its location which should help its operation. This scheme has shown the need for closer working between officers of the District Council and potential operators and action is being taken to facilitate that in future.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Having accessible local facilities for young people can help mitigate crime and disorder issues. This is particularly so in this case where the facility has been the subject of consultation with young people in the town. It also joins other facilities on this site being used by them already.
- 6.2 In a similar way to environmental issues, there is a growing realisation of the need to consider management issues for these types of facilities. This aspect is also being included in the wider discussions referred to in 5.2

7. CONSULTATION

7.1 There has been considerable consultation, on the ground, about the scheme and the Parish Council is itself the lead agency. The proposal has been considered by the internal Open Space Group, which supports the recommendation. There is also a requirement for Planning and Leisure Services to make specific comments on any scheme seeking to use developers' contributions and these are in Section 3.

8. PORTFOLIO HOLDERS COMMENTS

8.1 The Portfolio Holder for Leisure supports the recommendation.

9. RECOMMENDATION

9.1 It is recommended that the sum of £12,120 be allocated from developers' contributions to enable the construction of a skatepark facility at Gang Warily, Fawley and the funds to be released on the letting of the scheme.

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Background Papers:

Letter from Fawley Parish Council 10th
September 2003

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