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**Report to Education, Sport & Leisure**

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**Date of Meeting: 19 September 2013**

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**Subject: Skate Park Development Proposal in Alloa**

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**Report by: Heads of Education, Facilities Management and Strategy & Customer Services**

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**1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of a proposal to establish a skate park in Alloa and to seek endorsement of the Council's approach to supporting the proposal.

**2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1. It is recommended that the Committee:
- a) notes the scoping work which has been undertaken on the potential creation of a skate park in Alloa;
  - b) endorses the proposal to pursue the project to create a skate park in the Bowmar area of Alloa;
  - c) notes that the relevant services will provide support to facilitate a funding application by a community group to resource the project.

**3.0 Considerations**

- 3.1. The provision of skate parks in communities has been shown to have many potential benefits firmly aligned with our vision and priorities for Making Clackmannanshire Better. These include:
- **Providing a safe and attractive place for young people to gather** - provision of skate parks are a constructive way to produce more vibrant and cohesive communities. They can play a significant role in improving community safety, particularly contributing to reductions in anti-social behaviour.
  - **Promoting healthy and active lifestyles** - skateboarding is a positive way of promoting exercise, maintaining good physical and mental health and providing pathways to other activities that establish lifelong active and healthy behaviours. The personal challenges offered by

these kinds of leisure and sports create enjoyment through learning how to overcome obstacles and use energy creatively.

- **Community engagement in developing and managing a local resource** - a group of individuals from many sections of the community working together on such a project can contribute to a sense of ownership of the space. This often results in a greater respect from users, lessening the risk of vandalism whilst positively contributing to environmental improvements.

3.2. Further background information on the benefits of skate parks is provided in Appendix 1.

3.3. Locally, the recent establishment of a skate park in Sauchie has been very popular with young people and there is evidence of significant demand for a similar facility elsewhere in the county. Our Youth Services team have reported the following:

- there has been a significant increase in detached youth work contacts with young people in Alloa town centre; the vast majority of these young people are aged 12 – 16 years predominantly male (75%) with a keen and active interest in wheel sports, including BMX stunt bikes, skateboards, scooters and in-line skates;
- the service procured 2 mobile ramps which they have used at Bowmar Centre on a Friday night. These have proved to be successful with all age groups with some 55+ young people attending. Young users have reported that they would like to see a more varied and challenging facility. To complement this activity, Youth Services have opened a youth cafe drop-in on a Friday night at the Bowmar;
- following a Police Scotland initiative in Tullibody, 6 visits were arranged during the month of March funded through Community Safety to the Unit 23 indoor skate park in Dumbarton. More than 50 young people from across Clackmannanshire attended;
- using Community Safety funding, 50 plain white helmets were purchased. 4 project groups were identified in Alloa, Sauchie, Tullibody and Tillicoultry. The young people participated in workshops designing their own helmets which they kept for use in wheeled sports;
- Clackmannanshire Youth Voice (a local youth forum who aim to develop health and well being, employability and citizenship) have identified the issue of wheeled sport in the town centre through the Young Scot consultation 'Your Future, Your Police' with results being presented to the police at a national conference;

3.4. As a result of these factors and community expressions of interest for a skate park facility in Alloa, officers have been considering the potential for this to be taken forward.

- 3.5. Some potential sites have been investigated, with a suitable one being identified adjacent to the Bowmar Centre (see attached plan at Appendix 2), which has the following benefits:
- Situated within an established park area;
  - Easy access from town on a cycle route;
  - Situated within close proximity to other leisure facilities, including a community centre (staffed until 9pm), primary and secondary school;
  - Situated within an area of high priority based on health and deprivation indicators;
  - Close to a residential area but not situated directly adjacent to dwellings;
  - Easy access near a main road but not directly open to a main or busy road;
  - There is CCTV within the area;
  - There is adequate public lighting in the area of the park;
  - public toilet facilities are nearby;
  - the required land is owned by the Council and can be made available to a community interest on such basis as is necessary to secure community funding
- 3.6 In addition, this site offers the potential for synergies with the Alloa Greenspace Improvement Project for which grant funding of £32,500 has been secured to support public realm and greenspace improvements and the preparation of a masterplan for the area between the River Forth/Alloa Harbour, the Bowmar/Mar Policies Housing Estate and Alloa Tower.
- 3.7 There are a number of funding streams which could be accessed to fund the development of another skate park. In particular, the Legacy 2014, Active Places Fund could provide 90% capital funding for such a project were it:
- a) created on land within an area classed as deprived under in Scottish Indices of Multiple Deprivation;
  - b) applied for by a community group who would have security of tenure over the asset (e.g. 25 year lease or ownership).
- 3.8 The cost of creating a new skate park would depend on its size and specification. However, by way of illustration, the Sauchie skate park cost £80,000. Larger and higher specification developments, such as one in Glenrothes and another in Stirling, were constructed for £180,000 and £280,000 respectively.
- 3.9 Clackmannanshire Youth Voice have expressed their support for the possibility of creating a skate park in the Bowmar area and are keen to lead

on any funding application. As a constituted body, the community group would also be able to apply to numerous other external funding streams to attract any match-funding that might be required.

- 3.10 Community-led approaches have been used successfully in a number of other local authority areas and in some cases communities have taken on responsibility for the maintenance of facilities, continuing to source external funding when required.
- 3.11 The deadline for the next round of Legacy 2014 Active Places Fund is February 2014. It has a two/three month turn over and in support of any application there would have to be:
1. Business plan
  2. Site plan
  3. Quotations
  4. Programme of use
  5. Vulnerable persons protection policy
- 3.12 As in-kind support, the Council could provide support to the community group in preparing the funding application, including development of a business plan and securing quotations. Clearly, the lease or transfer of the site would represent substantial in-kind support.

### **Conclusions**

- 3.13 This proposal presents an opportunity to develop a new and highly sought-after community facility in Alloa using an innovative, sustainable and community based model of service design.
- 3.14 Its benefits are consistent with the principles and aims in the draft Leisure & Sports Strategy enabling more of our young people to develop healthy and active behaviours that will provide better opportunities through an inclusive and community-led approach.

### **4.0 Sustainability Implications**

- 4.1. There are no direct sustainability implications arising from this report.

### **5.0 Resource Implications**

- 5.1. *Financial Details* - the proposal would not require any unbudgeted expenditure from either the capital or revenue budgets.
- 5.2. Finance have been consulted and have agreed the financial implications as set out in the report. Yes
- 5.3. *Staffing* - resources will be required to support the bid as outlined above.

### **6.0 Exempt Reports**

6.1. Is this report exempt? Yes  (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No

## 7.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

(1) **Our Priorities** (Please double click on the check box )

The area has a positive image and attracts people and businesses	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Our communities are more cohesive and inclusive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
People are better skilled, trained and ready for learning and employment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Our communities are safer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Vulnerable people and families are supported	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Substance misuse and its effects are reduced	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Health is improving and health inequalities are reducing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The environment is protected and enhanced for all	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The Council is effective, efficient and recognised for excellence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

(2) **Council Policies** (Please detail)

SOA 2013-23

Draft Leisure & Sport Strategy

## 8.0 Equalities Impact

8.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?

Yes  No  n/a at this stage.

## 9.0 Legality

9.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes

## 10.0 Appendices

10.1 Please list any appendices attached to this report. If there are no appendices, please state "none".

Appendix 1. - Benefits of skate parks to Communities  
Appendix 2 - Site Map



## 11.0 Background Papers

11.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered) - No

**Author(s)**

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## **Appendix 1 - Benefits of skate parks to communities**

Skate parks provide community value in four significant ways:

### **1. Social Benefits**

- Skate parks provide for young people who aren't attracted to traditional team sports a place to go and express themselves in an individual and athletic manner. Getting young people, particularly those who are more vulnerable, involved in a personal and esteem-building activity like skateboarding helps them build the confidence to do well in other aspects of their lives.
- Skate parks provide a place for local youths to meet, socialise, and develop friendships based on a common, healthy interest.

### **2. Health and Developmental Benefits**

- Providing recreational opportunities to young people helps them develop healthy, active lifestyles, and the growing popularity of skateboarding is encouraging more and more people to go outdoors and get active. Developing a habitual desire for physical recreation in the formative years is important to a healthy future.
- Skateboarding is physically active and requires, at times, great concentration. It encourages young people to spend time outdoors, tests their endurance, sharpens their senses, and develops their creativity. Skateboarding requires no coaches and suggests no standardized approach to riding a skate park. Skaters are free to ride in their own way, to their own abilities, and encouraged to pursue their own style of skating.
- Youth in areas of deprivation are particularly prone to health issues related to lack of exercise due to the expense of equipment and travel, or lack of leisure time. For these communities a local skate park becomes an effective tool that teaches healthy, athletic living at an impressionable age and without prior significant financial outlay .

### **3. Community Safety Benefits**

- Providing parks for skateboarding is safer than young people skateboarding on the pavements and streets
- Drawing the activity to appropriate areas allows other preventative measures to be more joined-up and therefore effective.
- In addition to the direct health benefits, research suggests that skateboarding can help keep young people out of trouble. A 2006 study found that skateboarders are less likely to smoke cigarettes, have sex, and truant from school. ("Physical Activity and Sedentary Behavior Patterns are Associated with Selected Adolescent Health Risk Behaviors," *PEDIATRICS*, Vol. 117 No. 4, April 2006).

#### **4. Community Development Benefits**

- When parks are built right - with local skater input and involvement throughout the process - those young people develop a sense of ownership, pride, and community engagement. The very existence of the park is the result of their hard work and interaction with the broader community. It's a transformational learning process for these young people.
- Without skate parks, skateboarders are often treated as pariahs and repeatedly told to leave an area. This can reinforce negative attitudes towards the police, other civic bodies and community groups. The cumulative effects of this treatment instill a sense of disconnection to their community. This regrettable cycle creates at-risk youth and is easily preventable through better involvement and engagement. Treating young people as criminals for wanting to be active is counter-productive and can become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

<http://tonyhawkfoundation.org/faq/>

Appendix 2 - Proposed site, Bowmar Alloa

