

Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities

25th July 2019

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities Councillor A Khan

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

Ward(s) affected: Earlsdon

Title: Petition – War Memorial Park Ramp Renovation

Is this a key decision? : No

Executive Summary:

This report responds to a petition containing 1,425 signatures which was submitted to Coventry City Council and calls upon Coventry City Council to renovate the War Memorial Skatepark.

The petition reads:

“We are a campaign to renovate the War Memorial Skatepark as it is not fit for purpose because of its age, lack of repair and limited size. In its current state it is unsafe and cannot accommodate the number of skatepark users. Please support us in trying to improve the skatepark; making it bigger and better for all of us on wheels in Coventry (and beyond). We want a skatepark Coventry can be proud of “

This skateboarding facility was constructed during the year 2000 and includes a number of features. designed to cater for the younger age group. The park is under the control of the Councils Greenspace Service within the Place Directorate

This facility is inspected on a weekly basis and repairs/replacements are undertaken as and when necessary to maintain the features in a safe and usable condition. Currently there are no Findings [identified issues] regarding the current facility above “Low Risk” for the site and within continued practicable use.

A full refurbishment of this skatepark would cost approximately £150k to £200k to complete. The Parks Service does not have the existing resources to undertake this proposal.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities is recommended to:

1. Consider the content of the petition and note the concerns of the petitioners’
2. Note that inspections of the skateboarding have identified that the equipment is still within its practicable life.

3. Note that the skateboarding facility falls outside the catchment area of the nearest other similar facility
4. Agree that the skateboarding facility be retained and that features be replaced as and when they reach the end of their practicable life and be funded through a combination of external funding and existing budget provision.

List of Appendices included:

N/A

Other useful background papers:

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel, or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Petition – War Memorial Park Ramp Renovation

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 The War Memorial Park is located in the south of the city and designated a premier park attracting visitors from across the city and is under the control of the Parks Service within the Place Directorate. It is also holds Green Flag status which is a nationally recognised standard of excellence.
- 1.2 There is a children's play facility within the park containing a number of items of equipment designed to be appropriate for both the younger age group aged 4 to 7 years and the senior age group 8 to 13 years. In addition, the play site also includes a skate park containing a Half Pipe, two Quarter pipes, two jump boxes, two 25-degree flat ramps and a grind rail. Infrastructural elements associated with the play and youth provision include fencing, wooden posts, seating, bins, tarmac footpaths and safer surfacing.
- 1.3 Play and youth facilities in the City are inspected on a weekly basis and repairs/replacements are undertaken as and when necessary to maintain the equipment and associated infrastructural features in a safe and usable condition. In addition an annual independent inspection is undertaken by an external playground inspector.
- 1.4 The skatepark was constructed during the year 2000 at a cost of approximately £100,000. Recent inspections however have found that although the facility is nearing the end of its anticipated life it is still within practicable use. Some items are showing signs of wear and tear with minor repairs required relation to the concrete elements.
- 1.5 Inspections have confirmed that the Skate Park is in a safe and usable condition. It is recognised that the design and layout of the facility is now somewhat dated and has limited appeal to the older youths as it's not considered very challenging by modern skate park standards.
- 1.6 When external or internal inspections are undertaken, consideration is also given to the serviceable life expectancy of the facility, usually on an item by item basis as not all equipment needs to be replaced at the same time. In these cases, recommendations are made as to what items should be considered for replacement or improvement and the works are then included in the play area maintenance programme.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 During 2015/16 the Parks Service operational budget was reduced by £1m from 2016. As part of its financial strategy the service now reviews the replacement of play equipment and youth provision including skateparks as and when its practicable life ends. This review will be on an item by item and site by site basis and will take into consideration cost, remaining equipment / features and location to other similar facilities.
- 2.2 A full refurbishment of this skatepark would cost approximately £150k to £200k to complete. Parks Service does not have the existing resources to undertake this proposal, however they do not consider this would be necessary anyway as all the equipment is still in a safe and usable condition and within practicable use.
- 2.3 The option to remove the skatepark has been considered however this would result in the gradual further and overall reduction in skateboarding and overall youth provision as the nearest other skateboarding facility is located at the Alan Higgs Sports Centre, Allard Way, Coventry, and falls outside its catchment area.

- 2.4 It is therefore recommended that the Councils Park Service retain the facility and it continues to explore and exploit all funding opportunities both external and internal to replace items which reach the end of their practicable life with dynamic and high play value items of equipment and when possible install additional items to provide an exciting and stimulating play environment. Should the facility be replaced we will ensure that the skateboarding community is consulted and involved in the design.
- 2.5 The ability of the service to implement this recommendation will be subject to available resources and its ability to secure external funding.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

No consultation has taken place on this issue

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

To be agreed subject to approval of a recommendation within this report.

5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Corporate Services

5.1 Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations at the present time.

The service reviews the replacement of play and youth facilities as and when its practicable life ends. This review will be on an item by item and site by site basis and will take into consideration cost, remaining equipment and location to other play areas.

As and when the replacement of items of play equipment becomes necessary, this will be managed through a combination of external funding (for example S106 funds) and the existing budget provision.

5.2 Legal implications

The responsibility for managing and maintaining the children's play area in this park falls to the Council which has a duty of care towards employees, contractors and the public who use the play facilities. Play provision is governed by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Occupiers Liability Acts of 1957 and 1984. The Council has a legal responsibility to ensure the children's play area is in as safe a condition as reasonably practicable. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require providers to carry out risk assessments. Play provision also has to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

6. Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's Plan?

Parks and green spaces are highly valued by the citizens of Coventry and contribute greatly to improving the quality of life to those that live and work in the City, help address health inequalities and provides valuable wildlife habitats.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

Risk will be managed through the existing Place directorate risk profile.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

It is the Council's responsibility to ensure facilities are maintained in a safe condition

6.4 Equalities / EIA Implications for (or impact on) the environment

No equality impact assessments have been undertaken.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

No direct impact

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None

Report author(s):

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Gill Carter	Solicitor Team Leader (Regulatory)	Place	9 th July 19	9 th July 19
Lara Knight	Governance Services co-ordinator	Place	9 th July 19	9 th July 19
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and Members)				
Andrew Walster	Assistant Director (Streetscene and Regulatory Services)	Place	10 th July 19	11 th July 19
Councillor Abdul Khan	Cabinet Member for (Policy and Equalities)	-	24 th June 19	24 th June 19

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