



COMMITTEE: TYNEDALE LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

DATE: 15 MAY 2018

Petition requesting an All Weather Concrete Skate Park as part of a programme of improvements at Eastwood Park, West Wylam

Report of Director of Local Services

Cabinet Member: Glen Sanderson

Purpose of report

To acknowledge the recently received petition and seek the views of the Local Area Council on the request of the petitioner.

Recommendations

It is recommended that members consider the report and make officers aware of their views on the petitioners request so that this can help inform, along with other consultation and stakeholder feedback, the Council's decision as to whether to support (subject to the availability of resources) the construction of a skate park at Eastwood Park.

Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the "We want you to love where you live" priority included in the NCC Corporate Plan 2018-2021.

1. Key issues

1.1 Eastwood Park is a valuable local green space owned and managed by the county council in the east of Prudhoe. It comprises football pitches, a changing pavilion, a car park and a new children's play area, as well as some currently unused tennis courts that are in need of improvement, and a currently unused ex bowls pavilion that is also in need of investment if it is to be brought back into use. There is no longer a bowling green on the site but several community groups have recently expressed an interest in using this building.

1.2 There is an existing skate park facility at the town council's Highfield Park in the west of the town. Highfield Park is approximately a 2.5km walk from Eastwood Park and the nearby community, including the need to cross the Front Street. The Highfield Park facility is a medium sized, bolt down, metal and timber construction

that while currently in adequate condition and fit for purpose, will have a limited life and will be likely to need investment within the next 5 to 10 years.

1.3 While bolt down metal and timber skate park facilities can still be purchased they are a higher maintenance and less permanent installation, and poured concrete is generally regarded as providing a better, lower maintenance and more permanent and fit for purpose solution.

1.4 If a skate park facility were to be considered for Eastwood Park the nearest suitable location would be on the site of the tennis courts which is at least 70m from the nearest residential property and the other side of the existing children's play area and Eastwoods Road.

1.5 A typical poured concrete skate park (depending on the size) would cost in the region of £80,000-£120,000.

2. Background

2.1 An e-petition was received in October 2017 from Mr S Hutchinson of West Wylam.

The title of the petition was to request an 'All weather concrete skate park as part of the revamp of Eastwood Park, West Wylam'

The description of the e-petition was: 'Concerns for children's safety when travelling to and from Highfield Park along dangerous roads used by speeding vehicles. This matter needs to be resolved before an accident occurs.'

The petition was supported by 86 signatories.

2.2 In 2016 the county council and the town council jointly identified resources to undertake improvements at Eastwood Park focussing mainly on the provision of a new children's play area . As part of the planning for these improvements, in summer 2016 a local consultation exercise was undertaken using a questionnaire to gauge the views of the local community in the town about various possible improvements that could be considered.

2.3 Of the 208 questionnaires that were completed 62 (approximately 30%) indicated (by way of multiple choice questions and free text responses) that they would like to see a skate facility at Eastwood Park. Five respondents later went on to reiterate this desire in the 'General comments' section of the form while two respondents indicated that they were not in favour of a skate facility on the park.

2.4 Anecdotally we are also aware that some of the local residents who live immediately adjacent to the park are not in favour of a stake park because of concerns about noise and possible antisocial behaviour arising from such a facility.

2.5 In the autumn of 2017 the new children's play area at the park was constructed and has been well received and well used. Additional improvements to

litter bins, seating and the tennis courts are planned for the spring 2018, and discussions are ongoing about the possible future use of the ex bowls pavilion.

2.6 Improvements to the football changing pavilion are also being planned in partnership with the local youth football club.

2.7 Currently no county council resource has been identified for further major investment at Eastwood Park.

Implications

Policy	None
Finance and value for money	None
Legal	None
Procurement	None
Human Resources	None
Property	None
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	None
Risk Assessment	None
Crime & Disorder	None
Customer Consideration	The report is in response to a local petition raised through the council's e-petitions web page
Carbon reduction	None
Wards	Prudhoe South

Background papers:

None

Report sign off.

	initials
Monitoring Officer/Legal	N/A
Executive Director of Finance & S151 Officer	N/A
Relevant Executive Director	PJ
Chief Executive	N/A
Portfolio Holder(s)	GS

Author and Contact Details

Mike Jeffrey, Countryside and Green Spaces Manager

Tel: 01670 623020

email: mike.jeffrey@northumberland.gov.uk