**Agenda Item 4 17.74**

**24th October 2017**

**Report of the Skatepark Project Working Party.**

**Project Working Party (PWP): Cllrs. Clarke, Selby, Frost and Johnson, Mr Hazard and Mrs Hill.**

**Introduction**

The project to provide an additional facility for young people in the village has been ongoing over a period of years. That facility will take the form of a skate park. The provision is within the Parish Council’s Strategic Plan and a working party was formed to deliver the project within the business year.

Before agreeing a provider it was agreed that each prospective supplier would be given the opportunity to present a proposal and as a result, a presentation event held on 17th October, which was a great success. Three providers attended the event. One of the original five declined stating that the project was too small and one ceased trading during the consultation process. Over 42 residents and Councillors attended.

The term skate park provides too narrow a definition as in fact, as clearly demonstrated by the presenters such a facility can be used by skaters as well as boarders, and appeals to a wide range of ages and abilities.

From the feedback forms received at the end of the meeting the two most popular presentations were from Freestyle and Canvas who were subsequently shortlisted to enter into further dialogue with users and the council prior to contract award. Follow up meetings between the Working Party and Canvas and Freestyle have been arranged for early November. Both companies supply concrete parks which is the Council’s preferred option.

**Location**

The Working party have considered both Hadleigh Park and Wilson’s Field as potential locations for the skate park. The Working Group’s recommendation is to site the skate park at Hadleigh Park adjacent to the children’s play park for the following reasons:

* **Access** There is off road parking at Hadleigh Park. Younger children are likely to be accompanied by their parents/carers who may well access the site via a car. A Skate Park at Wilson’s Field with no off-road parking would add to incidences of on road parking and congestion. Station lane is already congested and the road is narrow. Double decker buses pass down station lane. There is no pavement adjacent to the GP Surgery and Wilson’s Field, which would require users to cross the road which is potentially hazardous for children and young people.
* **Safety** Children and young people can be vulnerable. Council has a duty of care to ensure that as far as practicable facilities provided are as safe as they can be. The proposed site at Hadleigh Park adjacent to the play park is overlooked by dog walkers passing by and users of the play park and open space. It is visible from the road. To site the park in an isolated location would be dangerous.
* **Noise** Concrete skate parks are less noisy that steel ones. There is already some tree screening in place at Hadleigh park which would help reduce any noise from the proposed concrete skatepark. Additional landscaping may further reduce this.
* **Future Development and social interaction** By siting the Skatepark at Hadleigh Park it allows for the possible future development of a route from the play park via the skate park past the allotments, community gardens, orchard and wetland development through the Acres and on to Millennium Woods. This would encourage wider community use and social interaction between many different age groups. The route would be wheelchair and pushchair friendly. The working party believe that antisocial behaviour is less likely when a site is well used by multiple groups of varying ages. The site also satisfies
* **Balancing facilities**There are many play areas and recreational facilities for young people on the West side of the village but only few on the East. There is development at Milldale and off Southwell Road which will lead to an increase in children and young people residing on the East of the Village. Siting the skate Park at Hadleigh Park would even out the spread of recreational facilities for young people over the whole spread of the village.
* **Wilson’s Field** already has facilities for young people including the MUGA and football goal posts which are well used by the young people of the village. These would have to be removed to site the skate park. Creating the facility here would disproportionately reduce the available open space. There is also a public footpath through Wilson’s field linking Station Lane to Mansfield Road and the Bus Stops. This is well used by residents. To re-site it would be expensive and detrimental.

**Resolution**

The working party propose that:

 Planning permission be applied for a concrete Skate Park at Hadleigh Park, adjacent to the existing children’s play area, based on a design to be produced in conjunction with the successful provide and users.

The working party will enter into dialogue with Canvas and Freestyle Concrete prior to making a final decision on the provider and the award of contract.

**For and on behalf of the Skate Park Working Party**

**October 2017**