

Report to	Chippenham Area Board
Date of Meeting	5th November 2012
Title of Report	Skatepark Task Group Report

Purpose of Report

To ask Councillors to note the following progress report from the Chippenham Skatepark Task Group.

1. Background

- 1.1. Young people in the community area have been actively campaigning for a new Skatepark since the removal of the previous facility in 2001.
- 1.2. Chippenham Community Area has the largest population of the 18 Community Areas within Wiltshire Council but despite this, is one of the few towns without a Skatepark.
- 1.3. The provision of a Skatepark in Chippenham is a priority in the Community Plan.
- 1.4. The Task Group is cogniscent of the negative history with the previous steel constructed facility installed in Monkton Park by North Wiltshire District Council.
- 1.5. Following the formation of the Skatepark Task Group in November 2010, approximately 20 sites were considered on land owned by Wiltshire Council, land owned by Chippenham Town Council and land in private ownership.
- 1.6. The Task Group found most unsuitable for a variety of reasons e.g. Risk of flooding, landowner declined permission, too remote, overhead cables etc
- 1.7. The Task Group has not overlooked the occasional use of the River Island site for events and activities, most notably the well established Folk Festival. Having consulted with contractors, a facility could be designed to accommodate and convert the space for temporary staging, seating etc
- 1.8. The Task Group is aware of potential plans being discussed by Chippenham Vision and Cherish Chippenham for this area. The Task Group is confident that a well designed Skatepark facility could enhance the plans and need not have a detrimental impact
- 1.9. The Task group agreed that River Island is the most suitable site for a Skatepark for the following reasons:
 - a. It is a central location
 - b. Informal supervision (i.e. people using the area) will limit opportunities for anti-social behaviour
 - c. It is situated near to The Olympiad Leisure Centre which is entirely appropriate for an outdoor sporting facility
 - d. It will have good access to toilets, refreshments, first aid etc
 - e. It is situated close to the town centre which may well bring economic benefits to local shops in the High Street
 - f. The Neighbourhood Police Team is now based at Monkton Park Offices, regularly patrol in the area and support the site in principle
 - g. The Integrated Youth Service now has a Youth Worker Team based in the Olympiad an outreach service which will be well placed to engage and support users of the site and work with other young people it may attract.
 - h. Chippenham Children's Parliament identified Monkton Park as the best site for a Skatepark

- i. A new redesigned Skatepark will be of concrete construction and will reduce noise levels significantly and mitigate against noise issues that were a problem with the previous steel construction Skatepark installed by NWDC
- j. The wheels on Skateboards, scooters and in line skates have developed significantly in the last decade and also reduce the noise issues experienced in the past
- k. There is good access to the site for emergency services and construction crew
- l. Car parking and good access by public transport (bus and train), good, safe access by foot (easy to avoid busy roads and road crossings)

1.10. An indoor facility has been considered and in the opinion of the Task Group should not be pursued instead of an outdoor facility. Ideally the group would wish to see both indoor and outdoor options in Chippenham as is the case in other areas. The group does not view an outdoor facility as in conflict with an indoor offer, it is viewed as complementary.

1.11. Indoor Skateparks require ongoing running costs for resources, heating, lighting, maintenance and qualified staff. There is no identified budget for this.

1.12. Indoor Skateparks will inevitably exclude some users unable to afford entrance fees.

1.13. The Task group is focussing on an outdoor facility on the River Island Site which it is confident will provide:

- a) Free access to everyone wishing to use it
- b) A key facility for a large number of young people
- c) Encourage healthy outdoor physical activity
- d) It would help to move skaters (skaters, scooters etc) away from public car parks and other public sites thereby reducing conflict with other members of the public
- e) A well designed park of concrete construction can enhance a public area as well as providing a resource for those involved in the sport. It would provide a focus for skaters that presently skate in/on areas for which they are not designed.
- f) A well designed and sited Skatepark provides a safe place for young people to go, meet with others of a similar interest. It helps foster a sense of identity, culturally, geographically and personally
- g) A well designed facility will enable the space to continue to be used for other occasional events and activities
- h) Concrete Skateparks offer designers the opportunity of engineering the facility into the landscape. Bunding that flows with the contours of the facility can create an aesthetically pleasing public space and something that people can be proud of
- i) It helps to create a positive relationship with and between young people contributing to local social capital and social cohesion. It contributes to a sense of self worth by recognising and responding to the needs of young people
- j) It can have economic benefits for the town centre as users are likely to purchase refreshments in the town, and parents may be encouraged to shop in town whilst their children play
- k) It contributes to a reduction in anti-social behaviour by focussing energy and attention into a more productive and rewarding outlet

- l) Young people of Chippenham have actively campaigned for the facility. Responding to their request would encourage their engagement and participation in developing their community.
- m) It would contribute to a reduction in travel to other towns to access appropriate facilities.

1.14. At the Area Board meeting on 9th January 2012 the Area Board agreed to support the following recommendations made by the Skatepark Task Group:

- a. Chippenham Skatepark Task Group to formally ask Chippenham Town Council to consider whether they have any objections to a public consultation exercise to install a concrete construction Skatepark in Monkton Park.
- b. Consultation to include a public meeting specifically for residents adjacent to the proposed site and consultation with the wider community area.
- c. Acoustic guidance from the Public Protection Team will be followed and a comprehensive noise impact assessment will be commissioned

<p>Background documents used in the preparation of this Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of Chippenham Area Board meeting 9th January 2012 • Chippenham Town Council Amenities Committee minutes 14th March 2012
---	--

2. Progress update

2.1. The Task Group has proceeded in accordance with this decision and provided an update at every Area Board meeting.

- a. Chippenham Town Council Amenities Committee formally responded following their meeting on 14th March 2012 to confirm the following: *Recommendation that: The Head of Service Delivery responds to Chippenham Area Board via the Skatepark Task Group, confirming that Chippenham Town Council has no objection to a public consultation exercise being undertaken to install a concrete construction Skatepark in Monkton Park.*
- b. The initial phase of consultation began with an article in the “Talk of the Town” newsletter published by Chippenham Town Council and an on line survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ChippenhamSkateparkSurvey> Residents have been invited to indicate whether they support the proposed site of River Island.
- c. Noise Assessment was commissioned from an independent company MACH Acoustics. Guidance and advice from Senior Officers in the Public Protection team was followed.

- 2.2. At the request of the Task Group, the Noise assessment has been scrutinised by Senior Officers in the Public Protection Team. The existing noise report lacks clarity. A clearer report has therefore been requested, to solely assess the River Island site which, in the professional opinion of Public Protection, will not adversely impact on residential amenity.”
- 2.3. The Chairman of the Task Group and a Senior Public Protection Officer met with a local resident at his request to address concerns raised. The resident did not accept reassurance that the proposed site of River Island would not have an adverse impact upon amenity or cause statutory nuisance.
- 2.4. The Task Group is confident that the guidance received from Professional Officers in the Public Protection Team & Independent Acoustics experts is accurate.
- 2.5. The Task Group agreed that in view of the past history with the Monkton Park site, a final further Noise Survey would be commissioned at No. 40 Sadlers Mead. It was felt that this would illustrate the efforts of the Task Group to be open and transparent and would reinforce earlier findings.
- 2.6. The Task Group agreed that response to queries must be proportionate and no further exceptions should be made. Any subsequent queries should be addressed through the Planning process.

3. Next steps

- 3.1. The additional noise survey has been commissioned and a new report requested
- 3.2. A public meeting has been scheduled for Monday 26th November, 7pm, Monkton Park Offices. The meeting will include the following:
- a) To give an overview of the work of the Task Group
 - b) Presentation of noise assessments results
 - c) Results of the survey/consultation
 - d) Experts available to answer questions
 - e) Provide reassurance about proposed site
 - f) Provide potential design options to enhance the area and enable the space to continue to be used for other activities on occasion (e.g. Folk Festival)
 - g) Discuss concerns
 - h) Opportunity to hear all views; those who support the site and those who do not
 - i) An opportunity for young people to comment

j) To outline the next phase which potentially will include a recommendation to the Area Board to proceed with:

- i. Consultation on potential design
- ii. Apply for Planning Permission. This will of course be carried out with the normal rigour and provide an opportunity for those with outstanding concerns to raise them

Appendices:	None
--------------------	-------------

No unpublished documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report.

Report Author	Chippenham Skatepark Task Group
----------------------	---------------------------------