

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Alice Park Trust Sub-Committee	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	6 December 2016	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
TITLE:	Options for improvements to Alice Park	
WARD:	Lambridge	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Please list all the appendices here, clearly indicating any which are exempt and the reasons for exemption Appendix 1 Skate park option for total project delivery of £97k Appendix 2 Skate park option for total project delivery of £97k + £20k Appendix 3 Facility Improvements – breakdown of expenditure Appendix 4a Map of possible additional pathways Appendix 4b Map of possible longer additional pathways		

1 THE ISSUE

1.1 At the meeting of the last sub-committee (23/08/2016) officers were asked to present more detailed proposals for the expenditure of £97k on (a) a skateboard park and (b) more broader investment in the park infrastructure (including Play).

The Council has provisionally allocated £97K within its capital programme for the development of a skate park in the east of Bath. Alice Park is the only location deemed suitable for this by the Council. The sub-committee may request that the Council considers now fully allocating this funding for the development of a skatepark, or request that the Council considers allocating the funding to alternative improvements to the park, or may decide not to request capital funding from the Council at all. The sub-committee would need to fully understand the revenue consequences and be responsible for funding these, for any new development within the park. The sub-committee is asked to advise Officers on which option it wishes to request the Council to consider.

2 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the Alice Park Trust sub-committee consider the options they may request the Council to consider for the allocation of capital expenditure and direct officers

accordingly, having due regard to how the Trust would fund any revenue consequences of development in the park.

3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 3.1 The Council's Parks Team could project manage the upgrades for all of the proposals in accordance with the agreed service level agreement with the sub-committee, and contract out the work to supply and install play kit to specialist suppliers.
- 3.2 The funding of ongoing revenue maintenance issues for any proposal, including the skatepark, would need to be considered and managed by the Trust. The Council has not allocated any revenue to the management and running of the skatepark.
- 3.3 Currently capital funding is provisionally allocated to the development of a Skateboard Park in the east of Bath by the Council. If the decision by the Alice Park sub-committee is they wish to pursue the funding of an alternative project, the sub-committee will have to submit a formal application to the Council to seek permission to redirect the budget. Before accepting the capital sum the Alice Park sub-committee would need to consider the revenue consequences of any spend.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The Council is sole corporate trustee of the Alice Park Trust. The sub-committee's terms of reference are to undertake the operational management functions in respect of the Alice Park site and its resources, in accordance with Trust's objects and the duties it owes pursuant to the Charities legislation.
- 4.2 Members in their capacity as Trustee must administer the Trust in good faith, abiding strictly to the objects of the Trust and administering the Trust for the benefit of the public which may at times conflict with the interests of the Council.
- 4.3 One highly important consideration for the APT sub-committee to consider, when deciding upon the issue of expenditure generally but specifically in respect of the skateboard park is, that the income from the Endowment and arising from the Trust Property is currently insufficient to maintain the park without a subsidy from B&NES's corporate funds, and therefore a very clear legal basis would be required in order to enable B&NES as trustee to permit any project to go ahead, if that would involve future expense. The Trust must secure the funding for the works and future maintenance, insurance etc before it commits to expenditure. There is also a potential conflict between B&NES's duty of prudence as trustee of the Trust and its interest in improving recreational facilities for its inhabitants as local authority.
- 4.3 The objects of the trust require the land bequeathed to be used as a public park and children's recreation ground. The sub-committee must consider whether any proposed use falls within the trust's objectives, and if so whether to permit the use requested. If it permits the use then it must decide on what terms, in order to ensure effective use of the park whilst minimising any conflict between the different uses to which the park is subject to under the terms of the trust deed.

5 THE REPORT

5.1 £97k has been identified for capital investment for the development of a skate park in the east of Bath. After site searches and public consultation, Alice Park was considered to be the only viable location. The proposals have not proved to be universally popular as to be expected in a site used by many. Alternatives for capital spend have been scoped to be presented to the sub-committee for consideration as it may be possible to approach the Council and to ask them to consider reallocating the funding for alternative improvements at Alice Park.

5.2 Option 1, to develop the skateboard park within the £97k allocated capital budget is detailed in Appendix 1. The only suitable site in the park is adjacent to the play area, facing into the park. This funding will fund a beginner/intermediate entry skatepark. Ongoing maintenance costs to be funded by the Trust.

5.3 Option 2, to develop the skateboard park within the £97K budget allocated from the Council but in addition the London Road and Snowhill Partnership have committed to raise a further £20,000 which would be used to enhance the scheme. Please see Appendix 2. Ongoing maintenance costs to be funded by the Trust.

5.2.1 Should a beginner / intermediate skatepark be installed at Alice Park, the most experienced riders could see this as a sub-optimal result, however the concept of the East (Alice Park) and West (Royal Victoria Park skatepark) was that the Royal Victoria Park skatepark would serve the needs of riders of all levels and the Alice Park skatepark would serve the needs of younger riders less experienced riders. See Appendix 1

5.2.2 This position was previously challenged by local campaigners who undertook to raise a further £20k to ensure a more challenging design. See Appendix 2

5.2.3 It could be considered that the appeal of skateparks, as observed at Royal Victoria Park, is predominantly male and restricted to those who use skateboards and scooters. The RVP skatepark does not appear to have broad appeal for females or those using bikes. Very few girls are observed using the facilities.

5.3 The Council has only allocated funding to developing a skate park in the east of Bath. If the sub-committee do not consider this appropriate development, then broader investment in Alice Park infrastructure could cover three main areas (See also report entitled SWOT Analysis to be considered by 6th December meeting) although no funding has been allocated for this:

(a) Children's Play

(b) Park infrastructure

(c) Improvement of horticultural features

See Appendix 3

5.3.1 **Childrens play:** Various options are available to improve the play area and to widen the age range for children on this site. The existing equipment provides more play for younger children; the layout is poor as most of the space is taken up with cradle swings. Furthermore there is currently limited play value due to a

very narrow range of equipment i.e. predominantly swings.

5.3.2 Park Infrastructure: One option is to complete the circular footpath for a variety of users including toddlers, children, wheelchair users, joggers etc. See Appendixes 4a and 4b. The longer pathway behind the tennis courts, (4b) has been costed at an additional £8k, but this would take it outside the available funding.

5.3.3 Horticulture: Redesign and replanting of the area between the World War 1 memorial area and the yew hedge, to include renovating the plaque area, removing the old shrub borders and cherry trees and replanting with fastigate trees to create a more formal look and under plant with a curving swathe of flowering bulbs. The path to the plinth could be flanked with Lavender and Roses to give the area more definition

6 RATIONALE

- 6.1 Option 1, developing the skatepark would provide for predominantly the teenage demographic which is currently underrepresented in the park.
- 6.2 Option 2 would provide a more encompassing improvement to benefit a wider range of park users of all ages.

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 The sub-committee at their 6th December meeting will consider a report based on a SWOT analysis that identifies further other areas that could be funded and these would feature in the Management Plan that will be presented to the sub-committee in February 2017
- 7.2 Do nothing

8 CONSULTATION

8.1 No additional consultation has taken place other than that focusing on the Skateboard proposal.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 9.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

Contact person	<i>Michael Rowan</i>
Background papers	<i>Reports & minutes of the August Sub-Committee meeting item 8.</i> https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=579&MId=4854&Ver=4
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