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**PART A: MATTERS DEALT WITH UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

**REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**DATE: 16 JUNE 2022**

**REPORT OF THE: PROGRAMME DIRECTOR FOR PLACE AND RESOURCES  
PHILLIP SPURR**

**TITLE OF REPORT: FUNDING FOR NORTON SKATE PARK**

**WARDS AFFECTED: NORTON EAST, NORTON WEST AND MALTON**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To consider the proposed financial support of up to £50,000 to renovate the half pipe at Norton Skate Park, as per a member proposal at Full Council on 17 February 2022.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 It is recommended that the following options are made available for consideration by Elected Members:

- (i) Funding for the scheme already allocated in the 2022/23 budget be provided to Norton Town Council (NTC) but subject to RDC having sight of the preferred quote for the work and on the understanding that all interest groups are consulted and included in ongoing development work at the site.
- (ii) RDC funding is conditional upon confirmation of any required match funding, should the cost of the scheme be above the RDC £50,000 contribution.

### **3.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

3.1 While NTC had sufficient funds and completed the renovation of the seven smaller pieces of equipment in the Skate Park, they currently do not have funds to support the renovation of the larger half pipe so would need to source this from elsewhere.

3.2 The funding and work on the half pipe would complete the renovation of the whole park and provide much needed active leisure facilities.

## **4.0 SIGNIFICANT RISKS**

- 4.1 In the current economic climate there is a risk of rising costs of materials and labour. The impact of this could be mitigated through the provision of in-kind support as outlined by stakeholders in this report.
- 4.2 Norton Town Council do not currently have the funds to support the renovation of the half pipe and so it will likely remain derelict until funds can be raised.
- 4.3 The half pipe along with the other seven recently renovated pieces of equipment that make up the Norton Skate Park are situated on land leased from the Fitzwilliam Malton Estate (FME). NTC currently has a lease until 2024 for the site and whilst they are hopeful that this will be renewed this is not guaranteed.

## **5.0 POLICY CONTEXT AND CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The Ryedale Council Plan: The upgrade and renovation of the half pipe would support the council commitment to healthy and happy communities, providing leisure facilities which support active lifestyles.
- 5.2 The Local Plan stresses the importance of community facilities and notes the scarcity of provision for young people and outdoor sports.
- 5.3 The Malton and Norton Neighbourhood Plan recognises the need to support more youth provision in the two towns, in order to *'further increase recreational options available to young people'*.
- 5.4 The Ryedale Sport and Active Lives Strategy (2013-2023) champions active and healthy lifestyles, encouraging more people to be involved in activities which promote healthy living.

## **REPORT**

### **6.0 REPORT DETAILS**

#### **Background Information and Current Operations:**

- 6.1 The Norton Skate Park is situated on Norton Road, Norton, on land owned by the FME.
- 6.2 In 2004 Ryedale District Council (RDC) took on the lease of the site and the skate park was established with support from North Yorkshire Police. The skate equipment was sourced second-hand and installed on site.
- 6.3 RDC remained responsible for the park until 2013 when Norton Town Council (NTC) took over the lease of the site. They were given a grant of £26,900 from RDC to support ongoing costs. Nothing now remains of this grant.
- 6.4 NTC currently have a 3 year lease with FME for the skate park site and NTC manages the whole site, including lighting, CCTV, cleaning, and general maintenance. Weekly inspections are undertaken with recommendations made to NTC who then carry out

repairs and maintenance as necessary. An annual Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) inspection is also undertaken. RDC's only role is rubbish collection. (NB: the CCTV is installed on the building adjacent to the park and the company who operate that building are paid a fee for this.)

- 6.5 NTC hope they will be able to secure renewed leases in perpetuity. NTC's current lease expires in April 2024.
- 6.6 NTC have confirmed the average annual costs of maintaining the site are approximately £5,000.

#### **The Current Equipment:**

- 6.7 The site consists of the large half pipe (the largest in the North of England) and seven smaller individual pieces of equipment. These are modular and can be moved.
- 6.8 Originally all the equipment had a 'Skatelite' surface with birch plywood underneath. Skatelite is a durable composite material used for sporting ramps such as this. Over time, the plywood underneath the Skatelite rotted which lifted the surfacing making it uneven and dangerous. This process started to happen to all pieces of equipment.
- 6.9 Since 2019 discussions have taken place as to how best to repair the equipment and reopen the park.
- 6.10 Below is a summary of recent discussions and activity from key stakeholders.

#### **Fitzwilliam Malton Estate:**

- 6.11 The Estate currently lease the site to NTC, on a three year lease. The current lease is set to expire in April 2024.
- 6.12 The Estate have confirmed they have no long-term plans for the site, though the site remains under continued review.

#### **Norton Town Council:**

- 6.13 NTC have approached the skate park refurbishment in two phases: phase one concentrating on resurfacing the seven pieces of equipment at the front of the site, and phase two centring on the half pipe at the rear of the site.
- 6.14 In 2019, quotes for resurfacing were sought for phase one. After going to tender, NTC commissioned Environmental Art to carry out the work. The equipment was resurfaced with a corrugated effect steel metal surface. At the same time the surface of the half pipe was removed but not resurfaced as part of phase one so remains unsurfaced to date.
- 6.15 Two Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) reports have been commissioned and received since this 2019 repair work was completed, the most recent one in September 2021. These reports recognise that the steel frames which support the structures are old but the surfacing is fit for purpose and can be used. However there was some concern from the local campaign group regarding the new surfacing and whether it was safe and met British Safety Standards. Due to these disagreements, the park remained closed.

- 6.16 There are British Safety Standards that apply to skate parks but a skate park does not have to meet all of these standards to be approved by RoSPA. This is why despite the Norton Skate Park passing a RoSPA inspection there were still some with concerns over safety.
- 6.17 NTC have since been working with the Malton and Norton Area Partnership (MNAP) and the campaign group Rescue the Ramp and taking on board their concerns.
- 6.18 An Extraordinary meeting of NTC was held on 9 March 2022 to agree and commission a contractor to re-do the resurfacing work on the seven ramps at the front of the park. King Ramps were employed and this work has now been completed. The work cost £43,000 and NTC have no further funds to contribute to work on the half pipe.
- 6.19 In addition to securing the contractor, NTC have recently spent up to £5,000 installing new fencing at the front of the skate park and new RoSPA-certified signage.

#### **The Half Pipe:**

- 6.20 The last RoSPA report (September 2021) highlighted that the half pipe needed a structural survey on the metal framework. The skating surface itself had been removed when the other equipment in the park was resurfaced by Environmental Art in 2019.
- 6.21 A new structural survey was commissioned by NTC in January 2022 and this has now been received. NTC will review and agree this prior to requesting quotes for any work required on the framework, in addition to quotes for the resurfacing work which are also being sought.
- 6.22 Four quotes have now been received for the work on the half pipe. This includes resurfacing the top, renovating the framework and replacing the sections of framework which are not possible to renovate. All quotes are in the region £50,000 - £70,000. NTC are also gauging interest from local organisations and businesses who may wish to support the scheme.

#### **Position of Malton and Norton Area Partnership (MNAP):**

- 6.23 In early 2021 MNAP considered taking on the half pipe project and being involved in ongoing support. However, they had no wish to incorporate as a Community Interest Company for example, as raising money for insurance would be too difficult. Currently, the site is covered by NTC's insurance. They would also have to pay VAT if they set up as a CIC whereas currently NTC can recover VAT.
- 6.24 MNAP suggested they'd be content to manage the half pipe on behalf of NTC and would be keen to build up a range of events and exhibitions at the site to widen its appeal but were not interested in direct campaign work. The Rescue the Ramp campaign group was formed to campaign and lobby for the repair and renovation of the half pipe.
- 6.25 In May 2021, the campaign group secured offers of volunteer support for some of the repair work (for example: in-kind labour support from Malton and Norton Lions for restoration of the steel framework, funding of up to £15,000 promised from Habito). These organisations would have to be approached again to ascertain if the offers still stand (note point 6.22 above).

- 6.26 However, health and safety concerns relating to the half pipe were raised. This was in relation to British Safety Standards for skate parks as referenced in point 6.16 above. Despite the RoSPA report ruling the park as safe, there was not full consensus on moving forward with renovations as some items which did not meet the British Safety Standard so progress was at an impasse.
- 6.27 MNAP have always maintained that so long as the park is inspected, reports completed and submitted and insurance maintained, then there can be no negligence.
- 2.28 MNAP would welcome the funding from RDC for the half pipe and are keen to see that the volunteers who have supported the project thus far continue to be involved in any ongoing work. RoSPA also recommend involving users in management and running of the skate park.
- 6.29 MNAP would recommend any remaining funds from the restoration of the half pipe be used to support event activity at the site.
- 6.30 MNAP are keen to work with NTC and MTC to support the work and running of the park.

#### **Position of Malton Town Council:**

- 6.31 Malton Town Council had previously made an annual 50% contribution to NTC for the maintenance of the skate park.
- 6.32 At a MTC meeting in April 2021 however, it was agreed that these annual contributions would stop and there would be no further financial support from MTC for the skate park.
- 6.33 Following consultation with schools and local communities, MTC are now exploring options for their provision of a low-maintenance cycling pump track and so are not committed to supporting the skate park further at this time.

#### **Previous RDC Funding Allocations:**

- 6.34 NTC have received two instalments of S106 funding to support work on the skate park:
- In 2017 £9,000 was committed for a wall ride and cladding. 50% of this funding was received by NTC in January 2018 with the remaining funds to be paid on completion. The project was not undertaken and the remaining funds were not paid. The initial payment was fed into general skate park developments which followed.
  - In 2019 £30,818 was committed for major upgrades. This was paid 100% up front and received by NTC in June 2019 because the S106 deadline was approaching; payment was conditioned so NTC had to spend it all within six months of receipt. NTC confirmed in 2021 that the moneys had been used, though no detailed evidence of expenditure has been provided. In May 2022, NTC sent a spreadsheet confirming the spend.

#### **Community Safety:**

- 6.35 From a community safety perspective RDC confirmed that no formal complaints have

been received regarding users of the skate park.

6.36 There have been some recent incidents of graffiti at the skate park but this is not isolated and is representative of a wider Ryedale issue.

6.37 The Hub Sergeant and the RDC Safer, Stronger Communities Manager have no problem with the skate park and the half pipe reopening.

### **Options for Funding:**

6.38 As NTC have now received quotes for the full renovation of the skate park, which fall within £50,000 - £70,000, the proposed £50,000 funding from RDC would be entirely used towards the repair and renovation with no funds left to support an event programme as proposed by MNAP.

6.39 It will be essential for RDC to have sight of the quotations for work prior to any offer of funding being made and that the funding be given on the understanding that community interest groups be consulted and included in progress and developments of work at the site. The allocation of funding from RDC will also be dependent on the confirmation of any match funding over the £50,000 allocated by RDC is secured prior to the commencement of the project.

## **7.0 IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The following implications have been identified:

(i) Financial

£50,000 ask from RDC for the renovation work. This funding has already been allocated within the budget for 2022/23.

(ii) Legal

A standard grant agreement will be needed to secure any relevant terms and conditions in advance of the funds being transferred.

(iii) Environmental, Ecological, Climate Change and Carbon

There are no anticipated to be any environmental or ecological impacts as a result of this scheme. The reinstatement of the half pipe will simply replace a structure that has previously existed.

(iv) Equalities

An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed prior to the offer of a grant if agreed by Members.

(v) Staffing

There is expected to be a limited impact on RDC Officers, however if the offer of a grant is made by Members, this will require capacity from both the Economic

Development and Finance teams to make the grant offer and manage and monitor the grant until the scheme is completed.

(vi) Planning

The land itself received planning permission in February 2002 (to become a skate park). Planning Officers have advised that they would need to see details of the extent of the half pipe to be replaced. They could then make a judgement on whether it would benefit from any permitted development rights or whether it would be considered a new structure. If it would be considered a new structure then it would constitute operational development and require planning permission. Officers are happy to advise NTC in due course.

(vii) Health and Safety

The RoSPA reports have deemed the park safe. There are not anticipated to be any Health and Safety implications for Ryedale District Council as a result of any decision.

(viii) Crime & Disorder

The Hub Sergeant has welcomed the reopening of the park and half pipe and no formal complaints of anti-social behaviour have been received in relation to it.

(ix) Data Privacy

As a grant bring provided to an external organisation, details of the recipient and grant awarded will be retained in the same manner as other RDC grant recipients.

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**Background Papers:**  
2021 RoSPA Report – Norton Skate Park

**Background Papers are available for inspection at:**  
Please make a request to the Economic Development team