

Meeting	Parks and Open Spaces Committee
Date	5 th March 2024
Report Title	Skate Park
Agenda Reference	16
Author	David Hunt, Head of Parks & Open Spaces

Officers Recommendation

1. To note the contents of the report.

Background

Skate Park opening hours and lighting questions have been raised.

We have received a request to consider extending the skate park opening hours to 21.00 for twelve months of the year and to consider having the site floodlit during any extended opening hours.

A local Ward Councillor had submitted the following query:

Why is the park closed at sunset during winter? Skaters have mentioned that the skatepark helped them with their mental health and considerably improved their sense of wellbeing. They requested that the park remains open until at least 21:00 all year round. A question was asked regards the lack of lighting; how much investment is required to provide lighting to enable use during dark hours. The resident mentioned that they worked during the day and considered the skatepark contributed to their mental health, they were upset that access was restricted during Autumn and Winter.

The response was:

There are planning restrictions at the skate park and is 'dusk til dawn' so 9pm is the latest it could be opened in the summer months, due to the residential homes in the proximity. The skate park is now made of concrete, so the Council could request a change to the planning conditions and see if it could be opened any later. There is a sliding scale of other times it opens depending on the season.

The lights do not work, and the ground would have to be completely excavated through the skate park and the school playground to fix the lighting. The cost of this was in the realms of £25,000 at the time and due to the planning conditions requiring it to be closed at dusk, it was felt this wouldn't be a worthwhile investment.

Solar lights have been considered, at one point there was a possible grant of £5,000 coming from a local business, but sadly the personnel changed, and nothing progressed.

We can review any potential funding applications. The Council has just set the budget for 24/25 and there is no budget for this to be funded internally.