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**REPORT TO THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE 20 JUNE 2012****PORTFOLIO: ENVIRONMENT****REPORT FROM HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES****SUBJECT: OPEN SPACES REFURBISHMENT PROGRAMME 2012/13****1 DECISION BEING RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 That this year's budget allocation is used to match fund a BMX track at Grove Woods, to resurface damaged footpaths and to top up match funding for the Canewdon Skateboard Park.

**2 FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE No: 06/12****3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 Each year a Capital budget is provided for on-going improvement of open spaces. Last year's programme comprised of the following schemes: match funding of skateboard facilities at Canewdon Recreation Ground; improvements to facilities at Hockley Woods; improved access at Sweyne Park and Grove Recreation Ground and improvements the water quality at Rochford Reservoir.
- 3.1 A proposal to install seating and landscape improvements to the skateboard ramps adjacent to the Rayleigh Leisure Centre proved to be uneconomic and was withdrawn from the programme with the agreement of the Portfolio Holder.
- 3.2 The grant application is currently being considered by Sport England in respect of the skateboard facilities at Canewdon and will be determined later this month. There is, however, a £5,000 shortfall for this £90,000 project. Currently the Council has committed £25,000, Canewdon Parish Council has committed £5,000 and £10,000 has been committed by Cory Environmental Trust.
- 3.3 In addition to addressing the £5,000 shortfall, it is proposed that this year's programme should also comprise the resurfacing of various footpaths, including one at Fairview Recreation Ground (Estimate £15,000) and match funding for the BMX track at Grove Woods Recreation Ground (Estimate £15,000). The BMX project has developed from public consultation around Grove Woods and links into Cherry Orchard Country Park. Discussions with local enthusiasts have resulted in a local club being constituted and opportunities for external funding.

**4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 The works referred to within this report have been developed in consultation with our Legal, Estates & Member Services Division. Members may determine that another corporate project should have a higher priority.

- 4.2 If the Sport England bid for funding for the skateboard park is unsuccessful, then a further report will give consideration to other options. These include suggestions from Hullbridge Parish Council for a contribution towards a new skateboard park at the recreation ground.

**5 RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This report recommends capital investment that will improve safety and access arrangements. There is a possibility that the skateboard park will not proceed if external funding is insufficient.

**6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 This report recommends expenditure in the order of £35,000, which matches this year's Capital allocation. These proposals do not have any on-going revenue implications.
- 6.2 The complete Capital Programme for 2012/13 will be presented to Council on 17 July 2012 for approval of any changes arising from the closure of the 2011/12 capital programme.

I confirm that the above recommendation does not depart from Council policy and that appropriate consideration has been given to any budgetary and legal implications.

SMT Lead Officer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Head of Environmental Services**

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**Background Papers:-**

None.

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