

North Lanarkshire Council

Report

Youth, Equalities and Empowerment Committee

approval noting

Ref LMCM/JS

Date 29/04/19

Wishawhillwood Pumptrack – BMX World Championship Qualifier

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide Committee with details of an approach made by Red Bull, sponsor of the World BMX Championships, to seek permission to hold a BMX World Championship qualifier at the Wishawhillwood Pumptrack in Craigneuk.

Recommendations

Committee is recommended to approve the proposal to grant Red Bull permission to hold a BMX World Championship Qualifier at Wishawhillwood and support the preparations in the same way as for any other major sporting event taking place in North Lanarkshire

Supporting Documents

The North Lanarkshire Plan

The proposal outlined in this report is in line with the following priorities and ambitions:-

Improve economic opportunities and outcomes.

Ambition 3. Market and promote North Lanarkshire as the place to live, learn, work, invest and visit.

Improve the ability, participation and empowerment of our communities.

Ambition 16. Transform our natural environment to support wellbeing and inward investment and enhance it for future generations.

1. Background

1.1 BMX Pumptrack

Through concentrated community development work carried out in Craigneuk, Motherwell in partnership with key community groups and under the auspices of 'Action for Craigneuk', a BMX pumptrack facility was established on a piece of waste land in Wishawhillwood adjacent to the Ravenscraig site.

The initial idea emerged through community engagement work carried out with young people in the area who were asked what they thought should be done to develop the site which had been used largely over recent years as a dumping ground. The response from the young people was overwhelmingly in favour of a 'pumptrack', a wheeled sports area designed for bmx bikes, skateboards, micro scooters and the like.

The Council supported the idea and the construction of the pumptrack was funded through Scottish Government Vacant and Derelict Land funding due to the site's proximity to the Ravenscraig site. The track was completed in December 2017.

2. Report

2.1 Socialtrack

Supported by a social enterprise called Socialtrack, as well as local schools and the wider community in the area, usage of the track has gone from strength to strength over its first year of operation. Socialtrack run weekly club nights and work closely with local schools to encourage young people to get involved in cycling. The club is fully inclusive. Its activities are aimed at those suffering from the effects of inequality and deprivation as well as the wider population. One of the group's major successes has been engagement with some young people who are the hardest to reach within our communities including looked after children.

The response from young people in Craigneuk has been incredible. Numbers attending club nights increase every week. As a result of the popularity of the track, coupled with the sense of ownership displayed by the young people, vandalism in Craigneuk is at an all-time low. Secondary fires reported in the area have decreased dramatically and youth disorder is now virtually non-existent.

The development of club 365 during the summer of 2018 also provided an opportunity for two local community groups to come together to support the programme and provide the activities around the pumptrack. To date, around 200 children have taken part in club 365 in the Craigneuk area.

Socialtrack has now formed a team of young people from the area who will compete in regional and national events beginning in Spring 2019. Wishaw Warriors have received local support for this venture in the form of sponsorship from local businesses.

The pumptrack has also developed a national reputation for the quality of the track itself. Professional riders from all over the UK, and beyond, have provided excellent reviews. It is suggested that the track could be the best of its kind in the UK.

On the back of this success, Red Bull, the energy drink company, have been taking an interest in what has been going on in Wishawhillwood, Craigneuk. Red Bull sponsor the World BMX Championships and provide coverage on their TV channel. They have now formally requested permission to hold one of this year's World Championship Qualifiers at the Wishawhillwood Pumptrack.

Red Bull have agreed to work in partnership with the Council and the local community to produce a memorable event which is scheduled to take place in mid-August 2019. The professional races will take place on a Saturday and Socialtrack are proposing to run a community event on the Sunday.

In view of the success of the pumptrack at Wishawhillwood in Craigneuk it is proposed that Council support this event and give Red Bull full permission to utilise the facility for a world championship qualifier.

The council's Event Manager will work closely with the promoter to ensure the successful delivery of the event. Corporate Communications will assist in the wider promotion of the event in line with Live, Learn, Work, Invest and Visit communications plans.

3. Equality and Diversity

3.1 Fairer Scotland

Wishawhillwood Pumptrack is fully inclusive and activities are available to all sections of the community.

3.2 Equality Impact Assessment

See section 3.1 above.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Impact

Estimates are being sought for the costs that may require to be covered by the Council, but this is likely to be a small commitment which could be covered by the Motherwell Local Development Programme for 2019/20 if some capital investment is required.

4.2 HR/Policy/Legislative Impact

This initiative supports the Council in fulfilling its duties under the terms of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

4.3 Environmental Impact

Effective use of an area of vacant land.

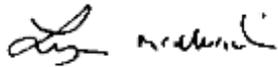
4.4 Risk Impact

None determined at present, event management strategy would include appropriate risk assessments.

5. Measures of success

5.1 Number of spectators attending the events.

5.2 Positive publicity for Craigneuk and North Lanarkshire.



Lizanne McMurrich
Head of Communities