

7. **LINWOOD PARK SKATE RAMP
YOUTH WORKERS' REPORT AND UPDATE**

Officer responsible Leisure Unit Manager	Author Community Recreation Advisor – Delia Walker DDI 3722628
Corporate Plan Output: Information and Advice 8.4 text 12.	

The purpose of this report is to inform the Community Board of the developments at the Linwood Park Skatepark.

Youth Workers, Duane Ngataierua and Robert Kara, monitored the use of Linwood Skatepark for six weeks from 20 December 2000 to 29 January 2001, Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, 7pm-10pm along with Youth Worker Eric Smith.

This was as a result from comments from the police, of an increase in violence in the area since the skate ramp had been opened.

Duane Ngataierua reports on behalf of himself and Robert Kara as follows:

Procedure: Through discussion with skaters and other users of the park and local residents find solutions to the problems that were occurring at the park.

Number of Users: An average of twenty to thirty skaters used the skate ramp between the hours of 7pm and 10pm.

Findings: Through discussion and observation with skate users and local residents I found that when there were incidents or fights at the park alcohol was always a factor, or it was a territory issue, East-side, west-side. In saying this the majority of local users are family and live in a gang environment, as many of the youths parents, uncles etc are either associates or members of gangs and that the young people are encouraged by older family members that issues are sorted out through violence.

Recommendations: To install video surveillance cameras.
More lights around the park.
Extension on the skate ramp as the number of users was up to twenty or thirty at a time.
Youth workers.
Drinking fountain beside the skate ramp.
Seating
To remove or relocate the changing sheds as it blocks the view from the road and local housing which could help with the monitoring of the park.

Summary: Over the last six weeks (20 December 2000 to 29 January 2001) the project was to observe and interact with the users of the skate park and to discuss with the skaters and other users of the park what the main causes of violence, and any solutions to the problems. There were recommendations suggested by skaters and local residents as stated above. The main causes to anti-social behaviour were alcohol abuse and unresolved issues from the home between youths as most of the skaters are family.

Also there were a number of incidents that happen outside my contracted hours. One incident which involved forty to fifty youths. This incident was reported by one of the local residents to the police. A number of youths were arrested. This incident was an East-side/ West-side gang related issue and Linwood skate park is regarded as the east-sides territory.

The local residents and skaters were pleased that they knew there now was a youth worker working at the park as many parents felt safer about there children going down to the park.

I would just like to add that there were only a few youths who are causing all the disruptions and violence at the skate park which is having a huge impact on the youth that are using the park for recreation use only.

Officers Comment:

Following the report from Eric Smith, the report above and information from the Police presented to the board at the last board meeting on Wednesday 31 January 2001, there is a need to continue to address the violence and incidents occurring at the Linwood Park skate ramp.

Two Youth Workers will be employed to monitor the use of the skate park from 7pm – 10pm, Thursday, Friday and Saturdays until the end of April. This is to be funded by the Leisure Unit and Parks Unit. It is to be noted that this funding has been reallocated from other projects and is straining these units' budgets.

In addition to this a working party is to be set up, in consultation with the Police and the Linwood Forum, to review the findings and recommendations from the Youth Workers and Police, and to address the broader issues of skate parks throughout Christchurch City. At the end of April the Youth Workers report will be considered along with the findings of the working party to review what further measures should be put in place to address the issues at the Linwood Skate Park.

Recommendation:

1. That the information be received.
2. That a report on progress with addressing the issues around Linwood Skate Park be presented to the board in May 2001.

Chairman's**Recommendation:**

That the officer's recommendations be adopted.