

Backflip thrills bowl site users

Park | Michael Gleeson

THE historic Lewis Park skate bowl looks set to stay open indefinitely, following a unanimous endorsement from Knox Council.

The council voted at last week's meeting to keep the site running, subject to finding the necessary funds in the 2010/11 budget.

The decision marked a complete about-face from two years ago, when the council was set to close the 21-year-old facility, before it backed down in the face of hundreds of furious protesters.

The motion that was passed – before a gallery packed with up to 30 skate bowl users – referred \$50,000 for remedial works and \$30,000 for improvement works to the upcoming budget.

It also identified the need to spend \$40,000 annually to keep it running.

Dinsdale Ward councillor Adam Gill, one of the representatives on the Lewis Park Skate and BMX reference group formed in the wake of the 2008 debacle, said the council had come to recognise the vital import-



Under-12 national champion Jai Bradley with Dave McComb at the bowl.
Picture: LAWRENCE PINDER N36KN611

ance of the skate bowl and park.

He urged the council to find the necessary funding to keep the site open and also acknowledged that maintenance had to be improved.

The *Leader* has previously reported on rubbish and puddles of water that have collected at the bottom of the main bowl.

"We either maintain it or

we have to remove it," Cr Gill said. "It will become unsafe if we don't do more, as the status quo isn't enough."

David Lalama, the organiser of the Save Knox Bowl campaign that forced council to scrap its original closure plans, said he was rapt with the decision. He said it would be a nervous wait until the draft budget, due to be released in May.

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