



Bristol Parks Forum

representing resident led
park groups and citywide organisations
involved in protecting and improving
Bristol's green spaces

BPF Statement 21st November 2010

Area Green Space Plans - Ideas and Options Papers

The P&GSS was drawn up to agree a set of minimum standards for parks provision for all residents of Bristol and to agree an investment plan to get those parks up to a good standard. There was a solution agreed by all parties to deal with the under investment in parks; by identifying funding streams to put into the parks that were most important in each neighbourhood to provide the Bristol standard for children's play, formal green space, wildlife areas etc. These particular spaces were to be identified using the distance and quantity standards set out in the strategy. The value of the space to the local community was also one of the criteria that was to be used to identify sites to be retained.

As part of the funding, it was agreed by all parties, political and BPF, that some spaces that were of low amenity value, that is were not needed to ensure that all the residents of Bristol had access to the correct quantity and distance standards of park space, and in some cases were areas where anti social behaviour caused problems to the residents. These could be sold off to fund the investment in the parks and green spaces that did comply with the quantity and distance standards.

The Area Green Space Plans consultation has been just that. A consultation to identify which those spaces that are not highly valued by the community are, so that they can be considered for development, which will bring in the funding needed to invest in the other parks.

Ideas and options have been put forward for consultation. We believe the Parks officers, who have repeatedly said that this exercise is to find out from the local residents what they think about their parks. Parks officers cannot know how each park is valued by the local residents, this is why the consultation exercise has been carried out. It is an information gathering exercise not a proposal to sell off all the green spaces identified in the AGSP ideas and option papers.

We believe that to throw out the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy, after all the time and effort put in by local residents to responding to the consultation, would be offensive.

We want to see what the consultation response is - throwing out the P&GSS and the AGSP would mean that we have prevented people from telling the council officers and political

administration what they think about their own green spaces. The decision on disposal of spaces was put back to December from November at the BPF's request so that there would be time for all the responses to be properly considered.

Until we see the report, we and the politicians do not have any grounds to say that the process is flawed.

The officer's report on the consultation process is being drafted. When it is available the BPF committee will be inspecting it to see whether the AGSP consultation process is, as it believes, sound. If a number of parks that have been identified by local people as very important to them are still in the report as being suitable for development, we will be objecting to the Scrutiny Commission and the Cabinet that the criteria for identifying areas for disposal have not been used and that the process is therefore unsound.

There is more information and background at
<http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/pgss.htm>

Bristol Parks Forum Committee

21st November 2010

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Bristol Parks Forum

Bristol Parks Forum was established by Bristol Parks as an umbrella organisation for community park groups and organisations in the city with an interest in their local parks and green spaces.

The forum is supported by Bristol City Council but acts independently and is the only 'community voice' that is dedicated to all of Bristol's green spaces. The forum's three main roles are to:

- offer an opportunity to share ideas and experience
- act as a consultation body for the Bristol Parks service and other agencies
- influence decision-making, including the allocation of resources

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