



Bristol Parks Forum

15th October 2016

Windmill Hill City Farm

Attendance: Over 30 people representing over 20 parks groups and NP groups

BPF Committee: Rob Action-Campbell, Hugh Holden, Sam Thomson, Fraser Bridgeford, Siân Parry

BCC: Gemma Dando Head of Neighbourhood Management and Acting Head of Parks

Apologies Caroline Dix - Chair - Arlington Garden Association.; Diane Jones, Friends of St George Park; Jo Corke FoSAP; Cllr Asher Craig; Eileen Stonebridge – Old Sneed Park Nature Reserve; Derek Hawkins – BPF Committee

Minutes taken by Siân

Matters Arising/Outstanding Actions

- **Feedback from Gemma- Parks Structure Chart- coming soon, cycling in parks, need to work up a standard for this; Power tool training- BPF to be updated.**

1. AVTM Metrobus and tree felling: Stephen Wickham. Greville Smythe Sub Group

BCC has handled the metrobus build poorly according to the local group. Tree felling has occurred for health and safety reasons according to BCC feedback. The Forum felt that this was a planning issue regarding obligations drawn up during the planning process and was a more general concern across the city, for example the work on the South Bristol Link had no detailed drawings regarding replacement planting/landscaping.

Action: Gemma to chase up with Di Robinson

2. Tennis Survey Consultation: David Pugill BCC Healthy Lifestyles

The LTA are proposing to put gate technology on courts in parks to generate income and fund improvements in future. There will be play for free sessions, etc. There was investment in some parks in 2008 but not all. Parks affected now include: Redcatch, St George, Canford, Horfield, Greville Smythe.

Horfield would be the *only* park where floodlighting may be possible as part of the funding; i.e. it would not apply anywhere else. Questions were raised about Redcatch Park because of the funding that had already been raised by local people for free tennis facilities there.

Members stated there has been no consultation with councillors on counters put in certain parks and the quality of consultation and the survey methodology should have been circulated to BPF before the process started. In future, it was agreed that BPF should be consulted on any other proposals.

Action: Parks to circulate to relevant Council Departments the need to consult BPF on any relevant proposals affecting parks and green spaces.

3. Parks Update: Gemma Dando

Gemma updated the Forum on several issues:

- Recruitment to Head of Parks - post advertised and shortlisting taking place by w/b 17th Oct, interviews early Nov with BPF committee represented on Panel.
- Changes in Parks structure. Operational staff reduction of £100k by annualising hours, making staff permanent etc. Reductions in managers; inspections and development work in parks brought together. 1 page structure to be circulated. Traded services changes with more resources for Fixit Team. One extra client co-ordinator covering central to join Tom and Sarah. Changes to be operational from 1st Nov. No frontline impact.
- Queries responded to: Head of Parks needs practical operational experience- covered in PS/JD; nature conservation post deleted- moved to development team; project management posts reduced from 4 to 3; events licensing still covered; budget consultation- 25% reduction in Parks and Downs 2018/19- 2019/20, approx £1.3m of £3.88m. Parks looking at Notts, Liverpool and other models for income generation as no further budget reductions could be made. Cems and crems under Parks. Strategies need to be streamlined to ensure efficiency savings can be made.

Other Queries

- Issue re getting Parks to put 2 benches in - **Gemma to take up**
- Communications strategy with parks groups needed- **Gemma to take up**
- BCC didn't respond to DCLG consultation on future of parks, BPF did. All responses on their website. Very few from LAs
- How much budget has been cut over last 4 years ? £500k 2012; £600k 2016- **Gemma to update**
- Senior Allotments officer post deleted due to efficiencies in team, the forum will continue.
- Stoke Park raised as an example of poor management since 2010, with 3 friends groups currently in existence. - **Gemma to take up**
- Are BCC revisiting Local Plan and AGSPs ? see Corporate Strategy released recently.
- What about having a fund for Parks and invite legacies; income generation from parks should stay in parks. Trust models elsewhere which could be tapped into eg Bournemouth
- What's happening with city centre spaces ? eg Harbourmaster role an anomaly, New cut management, other green space such as libraries, housing etc- **Gemma to take up**
- NPs relationship with parks needs to work better- **Gemma to take up**

4. Fraser- re Observer Article

Fraser reported that he, Joe and Hugh had met an Observer journalist to discuss issues regarding Bristol's parks and green spaces relevant to the CLG Committee investigation. The article was being published shortly (see link

<https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2016/oct/23/public-parks-nightmare-funding-crisis-parliament-inquiry>)

5. Parks Investment: Rob Stephen

Rob went through the updated spreadsheet he circulated regarding investment in particular parks, focusing on play and access: £500k play and £250 access. He would include priorities for NPs by end October, 3 per NP for 2017. Consultation to be done on maintenance for new areas or for play for next year.

He responded to queries on:

Redcatch Park, re grant funded works raised earlier; what about lower priorities such as biodiversity projects? LNRs will need to be recognised as a separate category and will be high priority; there is no corporate CIL funding for the next 2 years as this is being spent on the arena; parks grant funding-liaise with parks first before applying; corporate volunteers, can raise money through these; groups need specs for simple things like benches so groups can organise this themselves to save delays- Rob has a draft guide on 'guide to investing in parks **which he will send to BPF**; operational details re equipment needed to move a tree at Badocks Wood- **Gemma to take back**; NPv Parks role-groups can go via BPF if not involved in NP or direct to BCC, via Tom/Sarah/new person; BCC consulting with police re ASB issues as necessary.

Actions:

Rob will circulate a long list by end November to Rob AC and this will be circulated to parks groups.

Rob to attend every BPF meeting to give update

6. AGM

Committee to continue apart from Roland, they were thanked for all their hard work.

7 Terms of Reference

Rob suggested that the BPF ToR needed amending so that they reflected BPF's independence from the Council. This raised the issue of what form BPF could take such as a CIO and suggestions about its role on campaigning and its strategy for the future. The amended ToR will be put on the agenda for January's meeting.

AOB

- Fraser gave a ParkWork update
- Mark circulated the date of the Bristol Heritage Conference- he was attending on BPF Committee's behalf
- Sam- Web creation workshops are being held in Feb- Mar 2017
- Hugh- ToR- BPF bulletin to be circulated to NP environment sub groups where they exist.
BCC to send Rob list of contacts.
- Jane- Lockleaze- Cheswick Village not adopted, weed control needs to be sorted out. **BCC to resolve with SGC.**

Next Year's Meetings: 28 Jan; 8 April; 10 June; 14 Oct all at Windmill Hill City Farm.