



Bristol Parks Forum

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

Statement to Cabinet, 1st May 2018

Parks & Green Spaces - future funding model

from Bristol Parks Forum Committee

- Bristol Parks Forum is pleased that the consultation received such a high level of response.
- We welcome the fact that the Council is reviewing further those items such as advertising that the public did not support.
- We remain of the view that a clear protocol for advertising in parks should be agreed through further consultation covering both the size & location of any adverts and restrictions on types of advertising.
- There needs to be further local engagement to ensure that any activities introduced into parks are appropriate for the site.
- While it is right that commercial events should pay for the use of parks, there should not be any charge for small scale community events, especially where these are organised by park groups with the aim of attracting more people to get involved in looking after their park.
- Some parks & green spaces are not suitable for commercial activities but it is important that these continue to be maintained to ensure that everyone has access to quiet spaces for relaxation. It would be wrong to focus all resources on those parks which are raising income.
- We share the concerns raised in the consultation about the toilets that have been closed in some parks. Public toilets exist for a reason, and their closure may have a detrimental effect on the health & wellbeing of all park users. It will especially impact older people; people with medical conditions and those with children. Lack of toilet facilities is also likely to reduce the potential income from activities in some parks by discouraging visitors and reducing the length of their stay; it will also discourage volunteers from working in parks.

- We note that if the items under review are not taken forward then there will be a £170,000 short-fall in the budget even if other income streams reach their forecast levels.
- Achieving these increases in income for the financial year starting April 2019 is a tough target; especially given that there is need for further consultation on the details and that some require significant capital investment.
- It is essential that this funding model is reviewed in autumn 2018. The experience gained in running commercial activities this summer and progress on capital works need to be shown to be on track so that we can be confident that the proposed budget savings can be achieved before the budget for 2019-20 is set.
- The Council should commit to providing further revenue funding for a transition or implementation period from April 2019 if it is found that the income forecasts cannot be achieved in these timescales.
- We welcome the support expressed in the report for our proposals for a Parks Foundation.
- Overall we believe the Council should be more ambitious in its aspirations for Parks and be aiming to find ways to improve standards in our parks, not accepting the current 'just managing' situation. We look forward to working with the Council towards this aim.

Bristol Parks Forum Committee
Mark Logan (Chair)
Sam Thomson (Vice Chair)
Rob Acton-Campbell (Secretary)
Derek Hawkins (Treasurer)
Hugh Holden
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