

## **Statement to Cabinet, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2019**

### **Grant Funding for Parks and Green Spaces**

**from Rob Acton-Campbell**

In the Bristol Parks Forum statement to Cabinet about the consultation on parks funding back in May last year the BPF called for the Council to “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.”

This report shows that Bristol Parks has been open to finding ways of working and new sources of funding – I have been pleased to play my part in the bidding process and in particular in setting up the Bristol & Bath Parks Foundation.

Many of these grants have been won against strong national competition, for example there were around 50 applications for the Nesta Rethinking Parks grant with only 8 local authorities across the country being successful.

The awards demonstrate that the National Lottery Heritage Fund and others can see that Bristol is ambitious about the future of its parks and has the ability to deliver.

Working with Nesta and the National Trust on the Rethinking Parks and Future Parks projects gives the opportunity not only to learn from those organisations but also from the cohorts of other cities across the country who are part of these grant programmes.

Bristol is now seen as leading the way with the new Bristol & Bath Parks Foundation in particular attracting interest from many other local authorities keen to see what we are doing – and waiting to see whether we are successful – we will be!

While success in winning these grants is a team effort and should be celebrated as such, it would be wrong not to acknowledge the strong support received from Cllr Asher Craig in submitting these bids. Richard Ennion of Bristol Parks should also receive particular credit for taking the

lead role in the bidding process for the Rethinking Parks and Future Parks awards.

However, while we celebrate the success this report demonstrates, there should be no misunderstanding – our parks and green spaces are suffering from budget cuts over past years and need long-term funding; these one-off grants are no magical solution, more needs to be done.

The importance of parks and green space for health, wellbeing and mitigating some of the impacts of climate change on cities are well documented. The Bristol Parks Forum Vision sets out our aims for parks & green spaces and the Forum supports the challenging One City Plan aim for 2036 that ‘Everyone has access to excellent quality green space within a 10-minute walk from their home’.

The Bristol Parks Forum, the new trustees of the Bristol & Bath Foundation and many other organisations across the City are very willing to do what they can to improve and enhance our parks, and to campaign for more funding nationally. However, we also need an ongoing commitment from Bristol City Council in continuing to fund basic maintenance and to provide sufficient funds from CIL and other sources to ensure parks infrastructure is renewed when it reaches the end of its useful life.

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**Rob Acton-Campbell**  
**(Secretary Bristol Parks Forum & Chair of Trustees, Bristol & Bath Parks Foundation)**

**2nd September 2019**