

The Bristol Green Parties

Bristol North Green Party

Bristol South Green Party

reply to Cllr Tess Green, 10 Fairfield Road, Southville, tess.green@bristol.gov.uk

Hugh Holden,
Chair, Bristol Parks Forum

28th March 2011

Dear Hugh

Our apologies for not getting this response to you sooner.

You asked for clarification of how the Green Party stands on particular aspects of the PGSS. I hope this will be clear enough.

Sincerely

Pete Goodwin
on behalf of Tess Green

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The influence of Green Party councillors in establishing council policy is most likely to be as part of a negotiated coalition. You will appreciate that we can't make any presumptions about the outcome such negotiations. Even so, the comments that follow will give a reliable idea of our priorities.

Our 'default' position is that we fully support the objectives of the [Parks and Green Spaces Strategy](#), but we have from the start [challenged the funding plans](#). We consider them impracticable, unsustainable, and regressive (in that they generally benefit the wealthier areas of the city at the expense of the poorer districts). In any event, the failure of the AGSP exercise to identify saleable sites that would raise the money required to implement the PGSS confirms that it's time to revisit the whole funding strategy - as provided in Sec 4 pt2 of the PGSS: "*should there be insufficient 'low value', marginal land available once the area planning process has been concluded, the council will review the ambitions of the strategy and consider alternative funding sources.*" (foot of p42)

Dealing with your questions, therefore:

1. We do not distinguish between those sites the present Cabinet has designated for sale and the rest of the public estate, other than to respect the guarantees given to some sites following the Area Green Spaces exercise. For the rest, we can make no promises, but you can be sure our councillors would act on principle, and resist any sale of any green spaces solely in order to raise capital; there would have to be very persuasive additional

reasons to sell. That applies whether the decision is made in Cabinet or at Neighbourhood Partnership level.

2. As long as the current funding strategy continues, of course we would insist that the 70% commitment should be honoured. As stated above, though, we don't see the sale of green space as a desirable way to fund anything.

3. We fully support the 'Vision for Green Space in Bristol' and the eight objectives of the strategy, both appended below. Our only reservation is to suggest that in places the first 'vision' item may have to be considered in terms of easy access by public transport, and in terms of whether the local community actually wants it.

Vision for Green Space in Bristol

A City with good quality, attractive, enjoyable and accessible green spaces which meet the diverse needs of all Bristol citizens and visitors.

Within twenty years everyone in Bristol will have easy access to:

- A high quality traditional park, staffed by a park keeper in daylight hours, with features such as mature trees, ornamental planting, seating, toilets and a café.
- Good quality playing fields and changing rooms providing for a variety of sports, games and exercises.
- Open, welcoming and well managed natural green space, either meadows, woodland or riverside, with protected wildlife habitats.
- Well-kept, well-maintained, imaginative and challenging play facilities, from traditional equipped playgrounds to natural play spaces, wheels parks or games areas.
- Well maintained green space for informal recreation.

Objectives of the strategy

1. Raise the quality of parks and green spaces.
2. Encourage greater use and enjoyment of Bristol's parks and green spaces by all sectors of the community.
3. Contribute to the wider planning of the urban fabric of the city by providing a range of good quality parks and green spaces, which play a significant role in meeting the needs of balanced and sustainable communities and enhancing the urban landscape, to help make Bristol a green and sustainable city.
4. Protect needed green space from development.
5. Rectify shortage in particular types of green space across the city to ensure all residents have access to formal, informal, natural, sports and children & young people's spaces.
6. Provide a clear basis for beneficial investment in green spaces - identifying those areas of Bristol where investment and improvements in green space are most needed - helping the council 'spend better'.
7. Encourage active and healthy life-styles and promote social inclusion.
8. Encourage community participation in the improvement and management of green spaces.

Subject: Re: Open Letter from Bristol Parks Forum

Date: Fri, 18 Feb 2011 16:33:32 +0000

From: Tess Green <Tess.Green@bristol.gov.uk>

To: Bristol Parks Forum Rob <rob@bristolparksforum.org.uk>

Dear Rob,

I am writing with respect to the letter from Hugh Holden, which arrived just after the last Bristol Green Parties meeting. We will debate these issues at our next meeting in mid March and will be in a position to reply to you following this meeting.

In the mean time I would like to confirm that the Green Party is broadly in support of maintaining Bristol's green spaces.

Kind regards

Tess Green,

Councillor, Southville.