



## **Parks Debate Full Council 14th November**

[The Bristol Parks Forum petition](#) is now closed to new signatures, but as we reached the necessary threshold with over 3,500 signatures, there will now be a debate at the Full Council meeting at 6.00 pm on Tuesday 14 November at City Hall.

This is likely to be a busy meeting with a petition about libraries also being debated.

As with all Council meetings, the public can submit public statements, so please consider submitting a short statement either as an individual or on behalf of your group, setting out why parks are important to you.

Please keep statements concise (less than 1 side A4), we hope that there will be a range of statements covering different aspects of the importance of parks so please do not try to cover everything but focus on the issue that is most important to you – children’s play, nature conservation, health benefits, community and volunteering etc, etc

Statements should be emailed to [democratic.services@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@bristol.gov.uk) by 12 noon on the 13th Nov (but best not to leave it to the last moment). Please head emails as “Statement for Full Council – 14 November 2017”

It would be helpful if you could also send a copy of your statement to us and to your local Councillor. Public statements are no longer published online by the Council, but we do intend to publish any sent to us on our website.

## **Petition Wording : Protect our Parks (now closed)**

Bristol City Council's published budget proposals show that they will stop funding our parks from April 2019, relying instead on revenue generated from parks events and other outside sources. Bristol Parks Forum believes this is impossible to achieve in such a short timescale. Many other big cities are exploring this option, some have already decided it simply won't work; this was also the conclusion of last year's Select Committee of the House of Commons.

We, the undersigned, call on Bristol City Council to withdraw this budget plan and work with the Parks Forum and others to develop a realistic alternative.

### **Background information**

Bristol's parks & green spaces are important to the people of Bristol and to their health and wellbeing. They also play a vital role in attracting visitors to the city and reducing the impact of air pollution and climate change, the current plans place our parks at great risk.

The Bristol City Council proposal is for the Parks Service to operate on a 'cost neutral' basis from April 2019. This means they will stop funding parks - a budget cut of £4.5m.

Unless Bristol Parks find ways to replace all this funding with additional income there is a high risk that there will be a drastic cut in the maintenance of parks that will lead to a downward spiral of reduced use and increased anti-social behaviour as standards fall.

The budgeted parks income for 2016/17 was less than £1m. Increasing income on the scale proposed would require significant investment of both of capital and commercial expertise over several years.

Bristol Parks Forum believes that while a significant increase in income can be achieved; having well maintained parks operating on a cost neutral basis by 2019 is simply not possible.