

6 December 2010 – No 41

Area Green Space Plans

We are expecting the report on the AGSP consultation to be available on www.bristol.gov.uk/meetings tomorrow (Tues). Look for the details of the Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission on Wednesday 15 December and Cabinet on 16 December.

Vote for Friends of Okebourne

Friends of Okebourne are trying to raise funds for a community allotment. You can help by following the link below and voting for them in Star Radio's Community Project Vote.

The voting only requires an email address - so you and your family members can all vote individually per email address. Follow the link to the shortlist for more information about the project. Voting is open until 13th December.

<http://www.starbristol.com/the-community-project--vote-325423>

Natural Environment White Paper

Sian from the Avon Wildlife Trust has written to say:

"we've recently responded to the Discussion document on the NE White Paper which finished at the end of October. Defra are keen to continue its engagement with local groups or bodies to get further feedback before it finalises the White Paper in the Spring and have sent us a link to facilitate group discussions about the natural environment. I wondered if the Parks Forum would be interested in getting involved in this although not all Parks Groups would necessarily be interested?"

Hugh has suggested that we could hold a special meeting with interested groups in early January. If you are interested in taking part, please let us know. Comments have to be back by 31 Jan so the BPF meeting on 29 Jan would be too late.

More information about the consultation can be seen at:

<http://ww2.defra.gov.uk/environment/natural/whitepaper/>

Friends of Parks & Green Spaces Conference Report

A message from Roger Gates, Development Manager, GreenSpace South West

I am pleased to announce that the full report <http://www.green-space.org.uk/southwest/resources/publications.php> from the Friends of Parks & Green Spaces conference held on 23rd October, has now been produced. The report includes the presentations from the day, details of case studies and a list of useful publications and websites.

The Conference Report <http://www.green-space.org.uk/downloads/regions/sw/SW%20Friends%20of%20Parks%20Conference%2023.10.10%20Report.pdf> can be accessed on the GreenSpace South West Website.

A list of useful websites and resources for community groups and volunteers can be found at Useful links <http://www.green-space.org.uk/downloads/regions/sw/List%20of%20references%20and%20useful%20websites.pdf>

I have had to compress the presentation slides to keep the report below 100 pages! I think all the pages are legible but if you have any difficulty reading any of the slides or have any queries about the report or the resources within it, please don't hesitate to contact me.

As discussed at the conference, GreenSpace South West are now keen to further develop a regional Community Forum. As a first stage towards this I would like to create a contacts directory of delegates, which I plan to circulate amongst delegates over the next few weeks. This will hopefully enable more 'cross-communication' and help you to find solutions to your green space or parks related problems and also share good practise. If you do not wish to be included in this directory, please let me know and I won't include your details.

Once again I would like to thank all of you for helping to make the conference such a success.

Best wishes,

Roger

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The Bench Issue 60

The latest news from GreenSpace can be seen here:
<http://green-space-updates.org.uk/JEZ-AJ7Q-232WRVWM87/cr.aspx>

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www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

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As I suggested yesterday the report to Cabinet and the Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission is now available on www.bristol.gov.uk/meetings

The Council has also released a press statement which says that further sites will be removed from the disposal list compared with those listed in the report. The statement is below:

The City Council's Cabinet today confirmed its intentions for how it will take forward the proposals on Area Green Space Plans in the city.

Commenting on officers' recommendations following the consultation, Cllr Gary Hopkins, Cabinet Member for Strategic Transport, Waste and Targeted Improvement said:

"A huge amount has been said about the genuineness of the consultation that has taken place around the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy.

We are still to hear the voice of members of Scrutiny but we have examined the local feedback from across the city and wish to make certain announcements in advance of scrutiny to assist them in focusing their efforts.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the consultation. As a cabinet we have listened carefully to all points raised, and will continue to do so in the run up to our meeting next week where all final decisions shall be made.

We must of course keep in mind that the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy is a city-wide strategy that was agreed by all parties and was aimed at ensuring that people have access to good quality parks and green spaces close to where they live.

This process is the start of a renaissance of Bristol's parks and green spaces. The extra income that can be generated by disposing of a very small part of the city's 1500 hectares of open space makes good sense. It will bring much needed investment to help transform spaces that have for years been neglected of any sustained funding.

The majority of the 'disposals' planned are in fact partial and the object has been to not only raise money for parks in general but also to improve the security design and therefore usability of the individual park.

The Officer report has a list of sites that they have recommended for non disposal. The Cabinet agrees with this list.

There is also a list of sites where it was felt that deferment whilst other matters are explored was the right option. This is particularly important where masterplans should be worked with. We also agree with this list.

There are 2 sites where the first consideration should be the expansion/relocation of an existing school and this should be given the highest priority: Abingdon Road and Begbrook Open Space.

There is a list where potential flooding will need to be taken into account. These are the result of flood guidance some of which was issued by the Environment Agency after the start of consultation. We agree with this list.

In addition there are sites that on the instructions given to Officers in 2008 would be disposed of but which we as a Cabinet are minded to withdraw. There have been a variety of issues that have emerged during consultation and balancing the city and local needs we aim to remove from disposal. These are:

- Bushey Park
- Craydon Road Open Space (P)
- Kingshead Park (P)

- Oakbourne Road Open Space (P)
- St Annes Park (P)
- Wellington Hill

P = previously proposed partial disposal

There are in addition 3 further sites that need mention at this point.

- Lodge Hill - some publicly accessible park space should be retained and further consultation on the best form of this.

- Victory Park - adjacent council owned grazing land is of good environmental and amenity value and although not technically covered by Area Green Space Plans should be retained and safeguards put in place that hedgerows onto neighbouring sites are to be protected.

- Elderberry Walk, Southmead - the footprint of disposal should be reduced and a note made of the preference for housing on this and connected sites.

We shall now await comments from members of Scrutiny next week before making the final decisions at Cabinet on 16 December."

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17 December 2010 – No 42

Area Green Space Plans

The Council has issued a press statement setting out what was agreed at yesterday's Cabinet Meeting, the text of which is below. This and the statement the BPF made to the meeting can also be found at <http://www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/pgss.htm>

News release from Bristol City Council, Thursday 16 December 2010:

Cabinet agrees Area Green Space Plans

The City Council's Cabinet today set out its final decisions for how it will take forward the Area Green Space Plans in the city.

Council Leader Barbara Janke said: "This is the culmination of a four to five year process and I would like to thank everyone again for their contribution to this consultation. I can assure all those who have taken part that we have listened very carefully to all the points raised and changes have been made as a result.

"What we have agreed to tonight is a broad strategy to ensure protection for parks and green spaces in the city, and open up some for

development. But these disposals will not happen tomorrow - this is a 20-year strategy, and there will be ongoing extensive involvement of local residents, and increasingly the Neighbourhood Partnerships, through the planning process and any future development of these sites.

"We certainly believe that this will be of great benefit to the city, and a long-term investment into the city's great parks and green spaces."

Cllr Gary Hopkins, Cabinet Member for Strategic Transport, Waste and Targeted Improvement said: "I would like to thank everyone who has participated in this consultation, in particular the Parks Forum - the representative body for parks groups in the city - for their positive and constructive engagement.

"We have listened very carefully and we have revised some of the officers' recommendations, but we do now need to get on with making the investment into our parks and green spaces that will come from disposing of some of these sites. This means investment for new playgrounds, the space for our young people to enjoy our green spaces, and investment in facilities for all age groups.

"It is important to remember that these disposals only represent just over 2% of all our parks and green spaces in the city.

"At the same time, as result of acquiring new land, we will in fact have gained 5% more land as a result of this strategy, in particular the potential acquisitions of Stoke Park and Grove Wood."

The Cabinet agreed that the following sites are not sold for redevelopment:

- Embleton Road CPG
- Higham Street open space
- St Judes CPG
- Bushey Park YMCA
- Craydon Road Open Space (North)
- Kings Head Park
- Okebourne Road
- St Anne's Park
- Wellington Hill

That decision should be deferred in respect of the following sites:

(P = part of site)

- Crow Lane open space (P)
- Lockleaze open space (P)
- Muller Road Rec (Downend Farm) (P)
- Briery Leaze open space (P)
- Plummers Hill (P)

That a decision be deferred on the following sites to agree the split between recognising the need for space for older people and young people:

- Gill Avenue
- Delabere Avenue

That it be agreed that the following sites are sold for development:

- Allison Avenue
- Bath Road (3 lamps) (P)
- Belroyal Avenue
- Billand Close (Sherrin Way)
- Bonville Road open space
- Bracey Drive open space
- Brentry Hill
- Broomhill Park
- Broomhill Road/Emery Road
- Burnbush Close
- Craydon Road Triangle
- Fonthill Park
- Furber Road
- Gillebank Close
- Gladstone Street CPG
- Hazelbury Road open space (P)
- Huntingham Road/Keble Avenue
- Ladman Road and Bagnall Road
- Ladman Road and bus terminus
- Longcross Woodland (P)
- Moorend gardens
- Moorgrove (P)
- Newbridge Road open space (P)
- Portway tip/Daisy Field (P)
- Salcombe Road (P)
- Sturminster Close (P)
- Terrell Gardens
- Trym Valley (P)
- Valley Walk (North) (Blackthorn Close) (P)
- Valley Walk (South) (Rear of Urmstone) (P)
- Willmott Park - South (P)
- Withywood Park (Paybridge Road) (P)

Special Conditions

- Abingdon Road open space (Ridgeway playing fields) - the first consideration should be the expansion/relocation of an existing school.
- Begbrook Drive open space - the first consideration should be the expansion/relocation of an existing school
- Arnall Drive open space (south) - provision for play facilities on the site
- Duchess Way open space - disposal subject to mitigation measures

- Lodge Hill open space - Neighbourhood Partnership to advise Cabinet of choice for land use: either disposal and green space or allotments and green space
- Elderberry Walk - the footprint of disposal to be reduced - the preference is for housing on this and connected sites
- Snowdon Road open space - local co-ordinated plan to be in place at the time of any disposal

The following sites be approved for sale for disposal: it should be noted that disposal might not in fact take place as new information has come to light regarding flood risk which requires further work or clarification before any development plans can be taken forward:

Arnall Drive (North - Crow Lane) (P)
Cook Street open space
Dovercourt Road open space (P)
Henacre open space (P)
Land at rear of Merrimans Drive (P)
Maple Close
Napier Square Park
Tranmere Road
Willmott Park (North) (P)

Further note - re Victory Park - adjacent council owned grazing land is of good environmental and amenity value and, although not technically covered by area green space plans, should be retained and safeguards put in place that hedgerows onto neighbouring sites are to protected.

This will probably be my last update this year, so I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the BPF committee to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Rob Acton-Campbell
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