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BPF meeting 8th March

The minutes from our last meeting will be issued in due course. Part of the meeting was taken up with Tracey Morgan explaining the impact of the cuts to the Council's budgets. While there is no direct cut to the grounds maintenance budget it is clear that there will be big changes in the way parks are managed and that a lot of people that park groups have got to know will be leaving. Tracey explained that this year needs to be considered as a transition year with a concentration on doing the basics while the new structure is established.

I will include updates on the new structure and who is in the new roles as I get the information. In particular there have already been some changes to AEOs.

The agenda for our next meeting on 12th April will be finalised over the next couple of weeks so please let us know of anything you would like included.

Justin Archive

Message from Justin Smith's wider family in advance of his funeral on Friday:

Help create a 'Justin archive' for little Wilf.

"Hello all of Justin's wonderful friends, family, colleagues and associates. We're so awestruck by your tributes, memories, images of and connections with Justin, whose absence is so hard to bear.

For a more permanent and formal archive, please can you also send your lovely and inspiring images, documents and electronic memorabilia to the following email:

justin.photo@virginmedia.com

Many, many thanks. We're all so grateful to you.

Park Byelaws

As mentioned by Richard Fletcher at the meeting, the new parks byelaws go for consideration by Full Council tomorrow (Tues 18th March).

Gillian Douglas has prepared this update:

"We have now progressed a report to Full Council which will be considered by councillors at their meeting on 18th March. The meeting starts at 6pm and will be webcast. The byelaws items is fairly late in the agenda.

There are a number of points to highlight :

1) We started out considering the need for byelaws to cover all of the parks and green spaces in the council's Parks and Green Spaces Strategy (about 430). The final proposal covers 207 parks and green spaces. The reason is that we have to justify the inclusion of each site by showing evidence that there have been complaints of nuisance behaviour at the site. We used complaints made to the police, council and through the public consultation questionnaire to collate this evidence over a 2 year period. In about 200 cases there was no evidence of nuisance behaviour and we could not include these in the proposals. However we will still be encouraging the public to complain about nuisance behaviours at all sites and can use future data to consider new enforcement powers in the future e.g. when the Anti-Social Behaviour and Policing Bill comes in to effect.

2) The Police will be the main enforcement mechanism and will have the power to enforce against people who persist in nuisance behaviour and who do not respond to verbal requests to stop the behaviour. Council officers will be able to gather information and will work in partnership with the police. We will particularly look to undertake Neighbourhood Partnership action to address nuisance 'hotspots'.

3) The consultation process did raise a wide range of issues that will not be directly addressed by these byelaws but that nevertheless are very relevant to how safe people feel in our parks and green spaces e.g. irresponsible cycling, harassment, public order issues associated with alcohol and drugs. These are noted and we will be producing guidance and publicity to ensure that people know how to report these issues to the council and/or police and are encouraged to do so.

The report can be found at www.bristol.gov.uk/committee/2014/ta/ta000/0318_10b.pdf

If Full Council decides to go ahead with the byelaws there will be a 1 month public notice period during which people can raise objections/concerns directly with the Department for Communities and Local Government. The final decision to approve the byelaws lies with DCLG."

Northern Slopes Update

Len has sent the following update from the Northern Slopes Initiative reflecting the things he said at the meeting:

Through the help of the Council's Wild City project we have been able to publish:

1) A nature diary which contains activities to be carried out throughout the year, for people of all ages. It also tells you about the Slopes, and the people and wildlife, that use them.

For copies go to: www.northern-slopes-initiative.co.uk/Nature%20Diary

Or for hard copies email a name address to enquiries@northern-slopes-initiative.co.uk

2) A set of four self guided circular walks across either all or parts of the Slopes. There are two specific walks on individual parts of the Slopes – plus a “ramblers walk” and a “tree walk”. Each walk is calorie counted so you have an idea of how much you have used up (unless of course you eat a bar of chocolate after you finished!)

For copies go to: www.northern-slopes-initiative.co.uk/Walking%20leaflets

Or for hard copies email a name/address etc to enquiries@northern-slopes-initiative.co.uk

In December the Planning Committee gave planning permission to build houses on the part of the Slopes green space we had hoped to keep free of housing. Details are yet to be sorted out of how many and of what type, but it is really sad for us.

Permission was also given to green space improvements in the area of green space left – work was supposed to be started by the Council by March this year as they had the money. Nothing has happened – and although we have asked what is going on we haven't had a reply so far.

WENP Vacancies

The West of England Nature Partnership (WENP) are now recruiting for two new roles – WENP Chair and WENP Coordinator. The Coordinator role is full time with funding for three years 'a fab and unique role to help transform nature in Bristol'.

Details of the roles can be downloaded from the Partnership website at www.wenp.org.uk Closing date is 12:00 noon on April 4, 2014.

Please pass these detail on to anyone who you think might be interested in either role.

Important Open Space

One of the outcomes of the AGSP process a few years ago was that all parks and green spaces originally proposed for possible development and then retained were designated as Important Open Space (IOS) in the Site Allocations document. This document is now being considered by an inspector prior to its final adoption. Details can be seen at www.bristol.gov.uk/siteallocations

It is therefore of concern to the BPF committee that a planning application has been submitted to build on a privately owned area designated as IOS in St Werburghs. It seems to us that allowing this development could set an unwelcome and undesirable precedent. The planning application is reference 14/00532/F and details can be found via planningonline.bristol.gov.uk

Park Group Websites

A reminder that there are links on the right-hand side of the Parks Forum website at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk to all the websites, facebook pages and twitter accounts of park groups that I am aware of. The current featured site is that of Stoke Park Action Group, which includes links to the latest news on Stoke Park and upcoming events.

Please let me know if any links to park groups need adding / updating.

Rob Acton-Campbell
www.twitter.com/RobCrewsHole
Bristol Parks Forum
www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

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In this update: Parks Forum Meeting 12th April - Bristol Tree Forum 14th April - Parks Byelaws - Bristol Walking Festival - Town Greens - Green Capital - England's Great Litter Count - Local Flooding Management Consultation

Parks Forum Meeting 12th April

The agenda for our next meeting is now on our website here:
www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/BPFAgenda120414B.pdf

Meanwhile the minutes of our last meeting are here:
www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/BPFMinutes080314.pdf

Note this has some minor corrections from the version sent out via Bristol Parks' email list last week.

Bristol Tree Forum 14th April

Following my last update I got a reply from Clive saying:

'Hi Rob - It looks like you left out the cuts to tree budgets?'

If you want to find out more about the cuts and their implications then go along to the next meeting of the Bristol Tree Forum on Monday 14th April 2014 at 18.05 at City Hall (until 20.00). The agenda is here www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/TreeForum14thApril.pdf

There is a page listing the various posts about trees on our website at www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/information/bristols-trees

You might also want to visit the new Tree Forum website at www.euronova.co.uk/BristolTreeForum.htm

You will see from the agenda for our meeting on the 12th that we will be discussing the TreePips project.

Parks Byelaws

As you may have seen in the press the report on the byelaws was withdrawn from the Full Council meeting on 18th March.

The intention is that they will now be considered at the next Full Council in June, after the elections on 22nd May.

In the meantime the details will be discussed at the Neighbourhoods and Communities Scrutiny Commission on 10th April.

If you or your group have particular issues in your park that you think the byelaws will help with

then it would be worth making a statement to that meeting setting out the problems and how the byelaws will address them.

The proposed byelaws can still be seen in the report to the 18th March meeting here:
www.bristol.gov.uk/committee/2014/ta/ta000/0318_10b.pdf

A key issue that was not made clear in the papers for the Council meeting is who will decide which areas will be designated as exempt from certain byelaws. For example while under byelaw 10 barbecues are prohibited except in designated areas someone has to decide which areas will be designated, this could be specific areas as on the Downs (which already has its own byelaws) or whole parks.

As you will see from the agenda for our meeting Gillian Douglas will also be coming to talk to us about these issues on 12th April.

Town Greens

The Council's mapping system has now been updated to show the move recently designated Town Greens at Wellington Hill Playing Field and Bramble Drive. The full list with links to the maps can be seen here www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/BristolCommonsGreens.pdf

The next Public Rights of Way & Greens Committee meeting is tomorrow (Mon 31st March). The reports can be seen here www.bristol.gov.uk/committee/2014/wa/agenda/0331_1400_wa005.html

The Inspector's report on Tackley Green recommends that the application should be rejected, as with many previous cases this is on the basis that the land is held by the Council as public open space and that use is therefore 'by right' (with permission) rather than 'as of right' (without permission). There is a full list of previous decisions here:
www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/BristolTG.pdf

Bristol Walking Festival

The Festival runs from from 26 April to 26 May and the full programme is now available on their website at www.bristolwalkingfestival.co.uk There is also a facebook page at www.facebook.com/bristolwalkingfestival

Many Park Groups are involved in helping to run walks and of course many of Bristol's parks & green spaces for the venues for the walks.

Green Capital

A reminder that details of the various Green Capital Partnership sub-groups can be found at www.bristolgreencapital.org/about/

The next Partnership 'Green Mingle' is on Thursday 3rd of April (5pm – 7pm) at Bordeaux Quay.

The Bristol 2015 company (www.bristol2015.co.uk) is currently conducting a completely open recruitment for new board members. The deadline is Friday 4th April. If you or anyone you know would be interested then please email marietta.kirkbride@bristol2015.co.uk

England's Great Litter Count

Organised by Keep Britain Tidy, England's Great Litter Count aims to show which brands are dropped most as litter on our nation's streets, green spaces and beaches.

If you or your group would like to get involved there are more details here:
www.tinyurl.com/q2v469e It runs until 21st April.

Local Flooding Management Consultation

Bristol City Council is taking steps to manage the risk of flooding in your area and is seeking feedback on the draft plans.

This winter's widespread flooding across the UK has shown us the devastating affect that this natural disaster can have on people and communities. Currently Bristol is one of the top ten cities in the UK at risk from flooding. Thanks to the tidal tendencies of the Severn Estuary and River Avon, and it's vulnerability to surface flooding, there is a very real threat of severe flooding in many parts of the city. As climate change begins to take hold, these risks looks set to only get worse.

The Council, as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), is coordinating all future plans and action on flooding. Bristol City Council have just published a draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for consultation which sets out a vision and action plan for managing flood risks in the city. It takes into account the knowledge the council has gathered about flood risk but is intended to be developed through the involvement of communities and organisations.

As a result, the council are now asking residents to share their views on the draft strategy. This consultation is now open and more information and a questionnaire can be found at www.bristol.gov.uk/floodstrategy where you will also be able to download a copy of the draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. The draft plan and summary document are also available at local libraries and customer service points.

In addition, a series of community meetings will be held in the areas which are most at risk. These will give residents a chance to hear the proposed plans and ask any questions they may have.

8 May – Easton and Lawrence Hill: 6:30pm at St Mary Redcliffe School, Somerset Square.

12 May – Greater Brislington: 7pm at St Brendan's College, Broomhill Road.

13 May – Cabot forum: 7pm at Spike Island.

29 May – Henbury and Southmead: 6pm at The Scout Hut, Tranmere Avenue.

2 June – Avonmouth and Kingsweston: 6:30pm at Avonmouth Community Centre, 257 Avonmouth Road.

5 June – Hartcliffe: 7pm at the Wilmott Park Bowling Club, Fulford Road.

9 June – Greater Bedminster Community Partnership: 7pm at the ACTA Centre, Gladstone Street.

The online consultation officially closes on the 10 June 2014.

Rob Acton-Campbell

www.twitter.com/RobCrewsHole

Bristol Parks Forum

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk

2014 meeting dates: Sat 12th April - Sat 28th June - Sat 11 Oct