



**St George Neighbourhood Partnership (SGNP)  
Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2014**

**Report of: Rob Acton-Campbell – Environment Group.**

**Title:** Environment Subgroup

Recommendation:

- 1- Note general progress update (Rob Acton-Campbell)
- 2- Neighbourhood Partnership Service update (Gemma Dando)

**Part 1: General progress update**

- 1- The Environment sub-group met on Thursday 5th June. There was a low attendance with several people sending apologies for various reasons.
- 2- We were pleased that a Friends of Dundridge Park Group has now been formed and look forward to seeing them at future meetings.
- 3- The main part of the meeting was reviewing and confirming the status of projects funded by S106 and Clean & Green as reported elsewhere in the papers for this meeting. It was noted that the only previously funded S106 work remaining to be completed was the installation of an additional bin & benches near the wheels park in St George Park.
- 4- The group recommends that further S106 money is allocated to install a 'chicane' type entrance to Dundridge Park to replace the gate which is now locked open. See agenda item 10.
- 5- The group also asked for quotes for further items that have been suggested for use of S106 funding.
- 6- Concerns were raised about the standard of maintenance at St George Park which seems to be at a lower standard since the park keeper left. It was

agreed that a meeting should be arranged between the Friends of St George Park and Parks managers.

- 7- It was noted that TreePips are aiming to complete the tree planting plan for St George Park over the summer so that trees can be planted this coming winter.
- 8- We were pleased to learn that the kiosk in St George Park is reopening week beginning on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2014.
- 9- While some people have been seen fishing at St George lake during the close season it was noted that numbers were less than last year. There appears to be a degree of self policing of the fishing situation by regular fishermen. Some fishing line was cleared from the island by contractors placing rat poison.
- 10- There was discussion about the need to get more people involved in green spaces in St George. It was noted that some money may be available from Green Capital, it was thought that a green map of St George highlighting green spaces and off-road routes between them would be a good use of this money. There was also a suggestion of installing more bike stands at park entrances. It was also suggested that the Partnership should be making better use of the notice boards in parks to publicise its work and meeting dates.
- 11- The group has agreed that future meetings will be at Summerhill Methodist Church.

## **Part 2: Parks approach to Grounds Maintenance Service – proposal for NPs**

- 12- Last year as part of the Neighbourhood Partnership review questionnaire we asked what should be decided or influenced locally in the future. 3250 responses to the survey were received. Parks and green / open spaces was the third most frequent response to this question. Additionally, in the consultation focus groups, you told us that you wanted to be able to influence the design of the services and contracts that are provided by the council.

### **Proposal from BCC's Parks department**

- 13- The council's parks department would like to adapt the council's grounds maintenance service to respond to the priorities of the Neighbourhood Partnerships.
- 14- Definition of Grounds maintenance service: ***Grounds maintenance, grass cutting, litter picking, shrubs, maintenance of assets within green spaces.***

- 15- Parks would like to work with NPs to influence and prioritise what is important in relation to grounds maintenance in their area.
- 16- There will be a clear budget to pay for grounds maintenance services and we will use that as a guide to assist you in sharing your views with us on priorities.
- 17- We will reshape the service according to your priorities in each of the 14 NP areas. From this we will be looking at what are the services that we will deliver the same across the city and what may be more tailored to each NP according to priorities.
- 18- Whilst we are working with you in the next year/18 months on this, we will also be considering how we can deliver a longer term service which delivers to your needs for the next 5-10 years. This will include considering who the best provider of the service will be.
- 19- What we are asking from NPs
  - I. Each NP to tell us whether they want to be involved and to give their initial thoughts and comments.
  - II. NPs to decide how they want to progress this within their NP area (e.g. through an environment subgroup, special meeting, themed forum...)

### **Budget Context**

- 20- Parks has been impacted by the £500k saving it has to make from 2015/16, and also from the staff reductions as a result of the council-wide restructure. We are taking this opportunity to bring services together (e.g. caretaking, estates, parks) to achieve greater flexibility and speed of response, as well as economies of scale.