

Full Council

9th November 2021



Report of: Tim O’Gara, Director Legal and Democratic Services

Title: Petition Debate- Disabled Adults Play Park

Recommendation

That Full Council debates the petition and refers it to the Mayor / relevant Cabinet member for a formal response.

Summary

Under the Council’s petitions scheme, where a petition has 3,500 or more signatures from people who live, work or study in Bristol, the petition organiser can request a Full Council debate.

The Council has received a petition in relation to the Disabled Adults Play Park.

The petition organisers have requested that Full Council debates the petition.



Details of the petition

1. The wording of the petition is as follows:

Petition title / subject: Disabled Adults Play Park

Petition wording:

“My name is Michele Morrice, I am a full-time carer to my son, Declan who is 28 years old. He is 6ft 5 and has severe Autism, is nonverbal, with challenging behaviour, Tourette’s, and Bipolar. Dec loves the park especially the bird swing, but a large man with a disability at a public park causes stress for both of us, as other people attending the park can be very unkind.

Bristol City Council needs to provide a safe play setting for people aged 16 years and older with additional needs; for only them, their families, and carers to be able to access.

People with all types of disabilities including Autism, Dementia, Learning Difficulties and more, could benefit from a space for them to safely be themselves. Many disabilities result in individuals developmental ages being much younger than their birth date.

Play equipment helps with relaxation and being in a calming environment helps with mental health. As a carer, I find it upsetting that we have nowhere to access with our loved ones. It would give carers peace of mind that everyone there is understanding to the issues we all face daily, so we would not be stressing when they display unpredictable behaviour. It would also be a great opportunity for carers to meet others in the same position, and we could share experiences.

Bristol City Council's answer so far has been to allocate, in just a couple of parks, a one hour at 9 am on Sundays for people with additional needs. This is not acceptable who wants to rush there for that time, concerning it often takes hours to assist someone with additional needs to get ready and must upset them after 1-hour play to go home. Bristol City Council needs to take notice of the need for this.

I am firstly campaigning to everyone in Bristol, for support in creating an outdoor space allocated to people with additional needs in North Bristol; I would then like to campaign for another in South Bristol. This situation is affecting loads of disabled people and their carers in the Bristol area.

We were accessing Bournstream at Wotton-under-Edge which is a play and picnic site now just for children with special needs. **We want places like this in Bristol for adults with additional needs. We currently have nowhere!”**

2. The petition has been organised by the Carina Andrews & Michele Morrice.
[Petition · Disabled Adults Play Park · Change.org](#)
3. The petition has secured 53,472 signatures to date, 3,558 from Bristol residents.

4. The Full Council is asked to debate the petition.
5. Under the petition scheme, the petition organiser is permitted up to 5 minutes to present and speak to the petition. The petition scheme allows a further period of up to 15 minutes for discussion of the petition by councillors at the Full Council meeting.
6. The Full Council has agreed the following in relation to dealing with petitions with over 3500 signatures: The topic of the debate should be referred to the Mayor/Cabinet, or other relevant body with the petitioner's views and Full Council's views.

RECOMMENDATION

Following the debate, the Full Council is recommended to refer the petition to the Mayor, in order that the Mayor can consider his response, in liaison with the relevant Cabinet member.