

**The following statements have been submitted – full details are attached:**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Subject</b>
CS01	Councillor Richard Eddy	Tree Policy
CS02	Councillor Gary Hopkins	Jubilee Pool
CS03	Councillor Jos Clark	The former Wyevale Garden Centre Site
CS04	Councillor Ani Stafford-Townsend	Colston Four
CS05	Councillor Ed Plowden	Jubilee Pool

### **CS01**

#### **Members Forum statement from Cllr Richard Eddy**

##### **Subject: Tree Policy**

On the Full Council meeting dated 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021 (when the Mayor was away at the Cop-26 Conference in Glasgow), Professor John Tarlton of the Bristol Tree Forum made an insightful Public Forum statement. I am sure Democratic Services has forwarded this to the Mayor's Office for a formal response.

Professor Tarlton highlighted a glaring loophole in this Council's present planning policies where an applicant requires the felling of trees to permit a development to go-ahead. This omission was recently the subject of concern when the Development Control 'A' Committee (which I chair) debated the planning consent pertaining to the St Mary Le Port scheme on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

Under current policies, there is no obligation upon a developer to actually plant replacement trees in compensation, but merely an expectation that the developer will contribute to the Council's coffers for off-site provision. In too many cases, appropriate sites cannot be identified to permit replacement trees to be planted and the funds languish in the Council's general Section 106 pot.

This brings me to a broader matter of concern. As Full Council appreciates, the revised version of the draft Bristol Local Plan is presently being scrutinized by the Local Plan Working Group, consisting of Members and Officers and chaired by Cabinet Member Nicola Beech. Cllr Beech has, in my experience, invariably been inclusive and supportive of practical suggestions to enhance the new BLP. Indeed, she is sensibly using the next scheduled LPWG meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022 to review how the working group operates. May I respectfully ask that this meeting consider adding Tree Policy to our ongoing work programme- and consider Prof Tarlton's submission? It seems to me glaringly obvious that we are missing something very important if Tree Policy (particularly in the light of our Climate-Emergency and Carbon-Neutrality Declarations) is not looked at in our BLP review!

## **CS02**

**Members Forum statement from Cllr. Gary Hopkins**

**Subject: Jubilee Pool**

Few issues illustrate better the failure of the ivory tower central mayoral administration than that of Jubilee pool. Five years ago the budget paperwork said that the pool would close. We were told that they did not really mean it and after a strong campaign the pool remained open without subsidy but of course the council as freeholder stopped necessary capital spending. How much more worthwhile that would have been instead of burning £1M a month on Bristol energy.

More recently we had a huge hatchet job, laughingly called a consultation, proclaiming that there was no future for the pool under any circumstances. The fierce backlash got the stated position to asset transfer and despite an attempt to undermine the local group of Cllrs under pressure the pool was reopened. Parkwood were portrayed as killers of the pool but in practice they have worked well with the friends, have shown enthusiasm and commitment and have even put in an offer to buy the pool to run commercially.

The partnership between the community and Parkwood has produced full swimming sessions, a doubling of membership and a healthy trading surplus despite large energy bills. Despite the administrations stated position we see in practice barriers being thrown in the way of the transfer in the shape of refusing to extend parkwood's tenure to cover until the asset transfer can proceed and demanding a share of profits that the council's own officers say were impossible. These profits may be needed for investment in energy efficiency.

Thanks are due to the friends of the pool, Parkwood and of course the local community.

The friends have submitted their expression of interest and every party here has a representative with a copy, and we can only hope that no more road blocks are thrown in. It is interesting that the council's duty to promote public health has been completely absent from council thinking and actions but so many others including the commercial operator not only recognise the important duty but are taking positive action.

I may well be coming back to council in the future to seek backing for this important facility.

## **CS03**

**Members Forum statement from Cllr Jos Clark**

**Subject: The former Wyevale Garden Centre Site**

As you travel into Bristol along the A4 from Keynsham you will see, just as you enter the city boundary, the old Wyevale Garden Centre site, now looking sadly rundown. Since the site was sold to a local developer it has become a source of illegal activity and concern to local residents in Brislington West and further afield.

The sorry tale of its demise started during Easter 2019 when the owners cut down acres of trees without permission. My prompt action in getting TPOs slapped on the remaining trees undoubtedly stopped the developers in their tracks. However, since then, they have illegally put down hard core to create hard standing on the green belt, created bunds and dumped rubbish on ground previously covered with trees. The fire brigade have been called on numerous occasions to put out fires set by the owner, including burning toxic plastic and

with no regard for wildlife. On one of my visits to record the illegal activity, one of their employees threatened to throw me off the site but I assured him that I would be back to check on the damage they were doing.

The council currently has 4 Enforcement notices relating to this site but we see no enforcement or action by the owners to remedy their activities. Despite meetings with officers and assurances that the situation will be resolved we have seen very little or no action to resolve or bring these people to book. At the time of writing, we have been assured by officers that notices will be served but I am afraid this is all too late, the damage has been done and these people just continue to carry on abusing the green belt. Almost three years since the destruction began, my ward colleague, Cllr Varney and I are still receiving complaints from local residents about activities on this site, with the fire brigade being called to put out an out-of-control fire yet again just a few days ago.

The developers have a case to answer and I implore the council to serve notice and hold them to account. We need to protect our amenities and wildlife not let developers ride roughshod over our community.

#### **CS04**

##### **Members Forum statement from Cllr Ani Stafford-Townsend**

##### **Subject: Colston Four**

Residents of Central ward continue to be pleased that the statue of Colston has moved to the ward location of the M-Shed museum, instead of the Centre.

Following the renaming of Beacon Hall, Beacon Tower, The Yard, The Open Arms and many other venues, I hope the Mayor and the History Commission will support residents on their continued request to change their street names, often to their original, historical names.

I also hope Council will join me in my congratulations to the Colston 4.

#### **CS05**

##### **Members Forum statement from Cllr Ed Plowden**

##### **Subject: Jubilee Pool**

Once again Jubilee Pool is under threat, and thankfully the local community is now even more organised and the prospect of a Community Asset Transfer is looking more and more viable, not least as research shows that a number of pools across the country are thriving in these circumstances.

The Friends of Jubilee Pool have recently shared their initial Expression of Interest with interested parties and formally submitted it to the Council. It demonstrates that there are skilled local people, from many walks of life, with relevant experience to rise to the challenge of managing this vital local resource. The EOI also demonstrates that there is a lot

of local goodwill from tradespeople and others to supplement the skills of the core directors and advisors.

I would like to formally thank each and every one of the people involved for their energy, enthusiasm and expertise. I would also like to state that the local public support remains high with the Citywide Consultation receiving the most responses from Knowle, Brislington West and Windmill Hill, precisely the core geographic communities that the pool serves.

Since the Pool reopened membership numbers have increased to record numbers and many new and old faces have been coming through the doors, with several sessions consistently selling out. The operator, Parkwood, is reporting an operating profit despite energy costs rising.

I am very concerned about timescales and the recent refusal of officers to sign a contract extension to enable a viable time period for the Community Asset Transfer to have a chance of succeeding, despite the operator offering to continue without subsidy. This is particularly the case given the timescales set by the Council without an extension are simply impossible, and this is exacerbated by missing or inaccurate information in the original documents

I am also concerned that the Council is unprecedentedly asking for a share of the operating profit, when it is clear that operating profits will be needed alongside other funds to be re-invested in the facility, for example to improve energy efficiency.

I sincerely hope that the sterling work by local people to save the pool will not be quietly undermined by unreasonable timescales, expectations or attitudes and that the Council will do what is needed to support this local community upswell in good faith.