

PP 01 Bristol Allotment Forum – Hosepipe Ban (264 signatures)

We the undersigned support Bristol Allotments Forum in seeking to overturn the total hosepipe ban imposed by Bristol City Council (BCC) due to a perceived risk of contracting Legionnaire's Disease.

The Forum believes:

1. There is no proven evidence that legionella bacteria can be contracted through hosepipes connected to mains water supplies. No horticultural or public health body advocate such a ban.
2. Distributing harvested rainwater via a hose poses no risk whatsoever as bio-aerosols cannot be created.
3. The ban discriminates against persons with medical or disability issues.

Lifting the current unjustified ban is a pre-requisite of the Forum partnering with BCC to reduce mains water use by increasing rainwater storage and other eco-friendly practices such as mulching.

Bristol Allotments Forum enables plot holders to meet and discuss issues directly with BCC officers.

REPLY

Thank you for your petition.

I will ask officers to investigate the points you have raised, and present their findings to Councillor Ellie King for her consideration, as Cabinet lead. I also welcome your separate offer to meet with the Council to constructively discuss water use on allotments and have shared this with the relevant team.

As you will know, Bristol City Council are currently consulting on a new draft Parks and Green Spaces Strategy and draft Allotment Rent and Tenancy Agreement.

If they have not already, I would encourage your members to contribute to these consultations. We will consider all responses before adopting and implementing either document.

STATEMENT PS 01

Submitted by Suzanne Audrey

Title: Appointment of Independent Persons

At the Values and Ethics Committee on 9 October 2023 the Monitoring Officer stated that Independent Persons were appointed by the Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal Services, and there was no requirement in the legislation stating that the appointment was made by Full Council.

A post-meeting clarification dated 20 October 2023 indicated: "The recent recruitment process for Independent Persons will require the ratification of those appointments by Full Council and it is anticipated that this will be at the next ordinary meeting of Full Council on 14 November." ([Public Pack\)Minutes Document for Values and Ethics Sub-Committee, 27/09/2021 13:00 \(bristol.gov.uk\)](#))

Since the ratification of Mr Christopher Eskell on 10 September 2013 ([0910_mins2.pdf \(bristol.gov.uk\)](#)) a number of Independent Persons have been appointed but not ratified by Full Council. However, we do not know how many, who they were, when they were appointed, and why Full Council was not asked to ratify them in line with Section 28 of the Localism Act 2011.

This should not be dismissed as a minor issue that has been corrected by the ratification of three Independent Persons today. The public, and councillors, have the right to know who all the Independent Persons have been over the last 10 years.

Questions about this important issue have been submitted to Full Council today, and I hope they will be answered without evasion.

If clear responses are not provided, it seems inevitable that requests will be made through the Council's complaints procedure or Freedom of Information process which could lead to the involvement of the Legal Ombudsman, Local Government Ombudsman or Information Commissioner's Office.

Hopefully that will not be necessary and we will be provided with the information in response to our questions.

REPLY

These questions have already been covered at Values and Ethics committee. The administration has no responsibility for this area, it's not an executive function and therefore I cannot comment on it.

These questions need to be resubmitted to the Values and Ethics Committee where both the monitoring officer and cross-party committee responsible can respond.

STATEMENT PS 02

Submitted by Jen Smith

Title: Independent Inquiry into the facts, faults and failings surrounding' Send surveillance

It's been over a year since Full Council voted for the Mayor to agree to hold a 'genuinely independent inquiry, conducted by the LGA or similar appropriate body into all the facts, faults and failings surrounding' Send surveillance.

The Mayor has not agreed to this. A complaint I made to the Monitoring Officer regarding this has been rejected, despite the entire incident bringing the city of Bristol into disrepute.

I wonder why the council has gone to such lengths to bury it. It makes a mockery of every single councillor who voted for the motion and shows Bristol to be undemocratic.

That the investigation never took place implies that the council has things to hide. I would also question how many residents have been subject to surveillance, for what purpose and how much data has been collated to profile people?

Make no mistake, the surveillance affects people's personal lives. Services have been withheld because of it and senior members of staff conspired to come up with plans in retaliation.

I have found people from external sources, the ICB and Bristol City Council all in discussion at one time or another regarding the data that had collected, shared and stored.

Bristol is a place where human rights breaches are council sanctioned and when called out, covered up.

REPLY

There has been an internal investigation and no wrongdoing was found.

Before taking any further action on an independent investigation, we decided to wait for our full OFSTED ILAC inspection. We took the Ofsted report to Cabinet and noted their comments regarding improvement in relationships with SEND parents.

We have recently appointed a new Director of Education and Skills, who will continue to lead our work in education alongside Bristol Parent Carer Forum and other partners.

STATEMENT PS 02

Submitted by Robin Hambleton on behalf of the SEND Alliance for St Christopher's.

Title: The Asset of Community Value (ACV) application for St Christopher's School site

Request

The SEND Alliance for St Christopher's calls on Bristol City Council to welcome and support the new proposal, recently submitted to the council by the SEND Alliance, to have the St Christopher's School site designated as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) under the Localism Act 2011.

Context

Founded by Catherine Grace in 1945, the much-loved St Christopher's School, based near the Downs, cared for and educated many of Bristol's most vulnerable children. For 75 years this residential special education school made a major contribution to the social wellbeing, not just of the hundreds of children who attended the school, but also to their families and to the local community of Bristol as a whole. In 2020 the school was closed. This was a moment of great sadness as the school was the last residential school for children with complex needs in the city and was a highly valued community asset.

Subsequently, an international property company (the FORE Partnership and associates) bought the land and submitted a planning application which envisaged the removal of many of the mature trees on the site and the building of large blocks of flats (Application No. 22/01221/F). This proposal, which did not include any provision on the site for SEND children, despite this being Bristol City Council policy, was completely out of scale and context with the Downs Conservation Area and the Grade II Listed building, 'Grace House', which was specifically designed for children with special education needs. Unsurprisingly this proposal met with over 1300 formal objections and, acting on the wise advice of city council planning officers, Bristol City Council firmly rejected this misguided planning application last August (a unanimous decision by DC 'A' Planning Committee, 9/8/23).

Our new application for Asset of Community Value (ACV) status for this land.

Now that this planning application has been refused exciting new possibilities could open up for this site. We have submitted an ACV application to the Community Right to Bid (CRtB) team that, not only provides new evidence showing how the site contributed to the social wellbeing of the local community over an extended period, but also demonstrates how this site can further the social wellbeing of the local community in the future.

The SEND Alliance, an unincorporated body, comprises a group of people from Bristol who have joined together with the specific aim of reinstating provision for the learning disabled at St Christopher's. This aim is, of course, consistent with Bristol City Council policy for this site, and is consistent with the fact that the lawful use of this land is as a special school. The Alliance has been working closely with three SEND charities (Freeways Trust; Alliance for Camphill; and Rescare), with local community organisations and with local businesses to ensure that this application is evidence-based and rigorous.

Those endorsing this ACV application.

We are very pleased with the number of highly respected figures in the local community who have agreed to endorse this ACV application. Quite apart from the Bristol citizens who are acting as Nominators of this bid (over 25 people) those endorsing this application include:

Stephen Rolph, Head of Community Assets and Enterprise, Locality. (Stephen is the leading national authority on Assets of Community Value).

Darren Jones MP, Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury.

Councillor Geoff Gollop, Westbury-on-Trym and Henleaze Ward

Councillor Sharon Scott, Westbury-on-Trym and Henleaze Ward

Councillor Steve Smith, Westbury-on-Trym and Henleaze Ward

Councillor Asher Craig, Deputy Mayor with responsibilities for Children's Services, Education and Equalities, Bristol City Council.

Councillor Tom Renhard, Cabinet Member for Housing Delivery and Homelessness

Councillor Christine Townsend, Chair, People Scrutiny Commission and Member of the Downs Committee

Councillor Kerry Bailes, Member, People Scrutiny Commission

The Rev. Emma Langley, Vicar of the Church in Westbury Park

Peter Lord CBE, Founder of Aardman Animations

A group representing former staff, carers, families, and friends of St Christopher's

Westbury Park Primary School

Westbury Park Community Association

Conclusion

In the light of the evidence submitted in our ACV application, and in the light of the evidence contained in this Public Statement, we ask Bristol City Council to welcome and support the SEND Alliance application to have the St Christopher's School site designated as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) under the Localism Act 2011. We request a written response to this Public Statement. Thank you.

REPLY

The application has been received and it is now with the appropriate team for processing.

The assessment for ACVs will be followed in the appropriate way.