

This section includes;-

- a) An extract from the minutes of Neighbourhood Partnership and Committee meeting for Stoke Bishop, Westbury on Trym, and Henleaze, dated 15th September 2010 Section 8, (available on Bristol City Council web site) attended by the local Councillors (6) Including Cllr Clare Campion-Smith Cabinet member for Children and Young People, plus elected neighbourhood representatives (12), Council Officers and members of the public
 - i. Please note that the last paragraph on page one and the following four paragraphs on page two were all stated by Cllr Clare Campion-Smith.
 - ii. Please note express agreement to the resolution by Cllr Clare Campion-Smith
 - iii. These minutes were agreed at the subsequent meeting on 6th December 2010.
- b) A copy of the letter from Clare Campion-Smith to Annie Hudson, Strategic Director for Children's Services referred to in the minutes.
- c) A copy of the statement issued by David Mayer ahead of the meeting and summarised on the night referred to in the minutes.

8 AREA CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

The Area Coordinator, Hayley Ash presented the report which outlined the agreement made so far by the Partnership in respect of the Wellbeing Fund, Formalising of the Wellbeing Process, Older Persons Wellbeing Fund and New Projects. In addition updates were given in respect of the three wards of the Partnership area.

The Partnership then received public forum submissions in respect of the following items -

(The statements will form part of the formal record of the meeting and a copy will be kept on the Minute Book).

Canford Park submitted by Hilary Long

The Partnership noted the statement.

(ATTACHED)

Stoke Lodge Playing Fields submitted by David Mayer and Hilary Long

The Partnership noted the statements and a debate then ensued.

Arising from consideration of the statements the following points were clarified -

- the Stoke Lodge playing fields were not just about a 'natural freedom' of access but also their significant contribution to the local landscape character of the local area and Bristol;
- the recommendations of the briefing note submitted to the Stoke Bishop Neighbourhood Forum be rejected in their entirety, not just the fencing, by the Executive Member;
- that the existing status quo to allow unfettered public access, to ensure open access as of right, be continued;
- that the support of the Neighbourhood Forum for the creation of a joint officer/resident/councillor working group to consider any possible improvements to Stoke Lodge be noted;

The Executive Member Clare Champion-Smith confirmed that she had met with members from Friends of Stoke Lodge on site last year. She also confirmed that she recognised that fencing on the site was not wanted by the community and that she was pleased that there was strong support for her suggestion to form a Working Group to steer future changes to the site.

Since then the Executive Member had written to Annie Hudson, Strategic Director for Children's Services (*copy of the letter to form part of the formal record of the meeting and be kept on the Minute Book*) advising her of the recent Cabinet decision to support shared use of the site.

The Cabinet also agreed that no fencing should be erected and that a working party be set up to provide dialogue between the different users of the field and to be a problem solving forum if difficulties arose. The Cabinet had requested that the capital programme for CYPS be amended to reflect this decision.

With regard to proposed improvements to the pitch, changing room facilities and drainage these would be subject to standard planning regulations which would ensure proper public consultation before any work commenced.

It was envisaged that Stoke Lodge could be seen as a 'flagship' for shared use/access for other sites in the city.

The Chair encapsulated the debate by making the following statement –

'Neighbourhood Partnership notes the strength of feeling expressed at the Stoke Bishop neighbourhood forum has been relayed to the Director of CYPS and further notes the Executive Member's assurance that the proposal to fence Stoke lodge had categorically been dropped and that the parkland would remain with open access for all as of right.'

On being put to the vote there was unanimous agreement to support the Chair's statement. The Executive Member was specifically asked by the Chair for her agreement and this was confirmed.

RESOLVED - that the strength of feeling expressed at the Stoke Bishop neighbourhood forum be noted and that its views had been relayed to the Director of CYPS. It was further noted that the Executive Member had given an assurance that the proposal to fence Stoke Lodge had categorically been dropped and that the parkland would remain with open access for all as of right.

13 September 2010

Dear Annie,

As you know, the cabinet requested last year that officers should explore the shared use of school playing fields and avoid fencing them off to the public unless there were very strong reasons for doing so. In April, cabinet asked that the community of Stoke Bishop should be consulted on whether continued shared use by Cotham School, the community and local teams who hire the pitches could be managed alongside aspirations to improve the standard of the pitches and renovate the changing rooms.

The consultation has taken place and all who responded were in favour of shared use. The cabinet has agreed that no fencing should be erected and that a working party be set up to provide dialogue between the different users of the field and to be a problem solving forum if difficulties arise.

I request that the capital programme for CYPS now be amended to reflect this decision.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Clare Champion-Smith

D. MAYER STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN MINUTES.

Record of part of Neighbourhood Partnership Open Forum Meeting dated 25th August, relating to the Public Consultation response to the Proposals and Recommendations contained in the Bristol City Council Briefing Note dated 22nd April 2010 at Stoke Lodge Parkland, Stoke Bishop.

1. We were procedurally obliged and required to respond at this Neighbourhood Partnership Open Forum Meeting to the specific contents of the only consultation documentation that had been issued, and specifically (a) The conclusion contained in the Briefing Note at clause 5.1 & 5.3. (b) The Project scope contained in the Briefing Note at clause 2.42 (c) The Recommendation contained in the Briefing Note at clause 6a.
2. The presentation given by officers in support of their proposals did nothing to persuade the assembled residents (in excess of 250 in attendance) that the Briefing Note had any substance of merit.
3. The opposition case put forward was enthusiastically endorsed by a unanimous vote of in excess of 250 residents. (with one abstention from a council official)
4. The opposition case demonstrated;-
 - a. Free public access by a significant number of Stoke Bishop inhabitants, and residents from neighbouring wards, that have indulged as of right in lawful sports and pastimes on Stoke Lodge Parklands for a period of 63 years.
 - b. The community have no wish to exclude reasonable shared use by Cotham School, and conversely Cotham School do not wish to exclude the community. This shared use solution has worked in perfect harmony as long as most people can remember, and does not require change.
 - c. The Community will not countenance any portion of the Parkland being fenced off.
 - d. Any proposal for improvements to the changing rooms will be considered on merit, but must not be disproportionate, or incongruous, and must be subject to full public consultation and planning process.
 - e. Any proposals for pitch drainage will be considered on merit and must be subject to independent expert advice. Strong environmental arguments were put forward urging caution and this has been supplemented by the submission made by DR Wim Blancke outlining the risks to neighbouring properties and the potentially major cost risk to the council in rectification works.
 - f. The case put forward in the Briefing Note in support of fencing on Health and Safety grounds was shown to be disproportionate and unsustainable. It was also shown that there is no Government Instruction or Recommendation for fencing on H&S grounds.
 - g. The case put forward in the Briefing Note in support of fencing on the grounds of paedophile risk was shown to be disproportionate.
 - h. The case put forward in the Briefing Note in support of fencing on the grounds of cost associated with inspection was shown to be flawed and irrelevant at this remote location which will always require proper inspection.
 - i. The extensive and varied public usage and public amenity value described and now supported by survey data, when compared with Cotham School use was shown to be overwhelmingly in favour of the community. The survey also shows that there is no viable alternative green space for 71% of the users interviewed, dog owners are a minority group and do not pose a problem, although action by the Council to provide faeces bins would be helpful.
 - j. The use by local clubs on pitches which are currently described (by them) as the cleanest in Bristol should be available at affordable cost and is welcomed and encouraged by the community as a wider community asset, and should be regarded as community use not school use.
 - k. The community use and contribution to well being was also made clear with obvious spin off benefits to the NHS; Not only with regard to sports men and women but particularly with regard to, new mothers, babies and toddlers, child development and innate risk assessment, the safe environment for adolescents, family groups, and very importantly given our unique age profile within Bristol, the opportunity for social interaction for the elderly, particularly baring in mind the absence of any safe alternative within easy walking distance, which, if removed, would be contrary to Council Policy.
 - l. The environmental risks and potential damage were fully exposed and explained with particular reference to the Councils own findings with regard to "access to green space" report and ongoing consultation document with regard to Stoke Bishop. NB see (e) above
 - m. The only commercial imperative that could be identified was the need for officers to allocate the proposed funding, none of which is actually available, before it is lost, irrespective of value.
5. The Briefing Note is the consultation documentation and its proposals and recommendations continue to remain available for acceptance and implementation. The meeting insisted that the briefing note, in respect to

Stoke Lodge, and its recommendations be formally rejected in their entirety and withdrawn. To which The Executive Member for Children and Young People reluctantly agreed.

6. Confirmation of this agreement is required because the meeting made its concern clear that no trust exists, and so long as the recommendations are left in abeyance we fear that they may be resurrected by Civil Service sleight of hand claiming that consultation had taken place, the procedural niceties had been met, and they now needed to proceed on the recommendations to avoid losing the funding, irrespective of the consultation findings.
7. It was agreed that a working party would be formed to give officers a more enlightened view of the scrutiny that any future, revised proposal will receive; it is imperative however that it must not assume special powers to circumvent or avoid future public consultation and due process on all issues relating to Stoke Lodge.
8. The public membership of the working party must be selected to ensure that it is truly representative of community views.
9. Since the scope of works to be considered under the working party will never align with the "major works" described in the briefing note there is no reason to use the working party as a reason to delay the formal rejection of the Briefing Note and its recommendations.

Summary

It is the clear recommendation of the SB Neighbourhood Forum that the recommendations in the briefing note are rejected by the Executive Member, Cllr Clare Champion-Smith and that the existing 'status quo' continues, which allows unfettered public access as of right to Stoke Lodge. The NF is supportive of the creation of a joint officer/resident/councillor working party to consider any possible improvements to Stoke Lodge.

David Mayer

On behalf of "Save Stoke Lodge Parkland".