

Appendix 2 – Notes from the Task and Finish Group

Meeting One

Task and Finish Group – Parks Task and Finish Group

Site visits

17th September 2016

Members of the Task and Finish Group visited three parks in different areas of the city. All three parks are very different and officers talk about the different issues the parks faced.

Feedback, comments and observations were made at the next meeting.

Edgwick Park



Stoke Green



Allesley Walled Garden



Allesley Park



Meeting Two
Task and Finish Group – Parks Task and Finish Group
Notes of the meeting from 20th October 2015

Present:

Cllr Bigham	Anne Lakin – Chair of Coventry Older Voices
Cllr Lakha	Kam Kaur – Age-friendly Cities
Cllr Lapsa	Graham Hood – Head of Green Space and Streetpride
Cllr Walsh	Vicky Castree – Scrutiny Co-ordinator

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Welcome, apologies and declarations of interest

Cllr Bigham's husband is Chair of Friends of Longford Park, Cllr Lapsa is a trusted trader with Age UK.

2. Feed-back from site visits

Visited three parks - Edgewick, Stoke Green and Allesley. Graham reported on the parks - Allesley is a huge neighbourhood park - well maintained, lots of features - popular. There were some issues - quality of footpath and seating. Edgewick has lots of antisocial issues attached it - gathering spot for drinking. Issues of child sexual exploitation, prostitution and lots of work going into making it safer. Gentleman's Green, Stoke - some investment - clock going in. Less antisocial behaviour but some rough sleeping. Not much would attract someone into the site other than dog walking. Parks Service know there is need to develop parks in line with community need. There is clear evidence to demonstrate the environmental and health benefits of parks. Links with Coventry being a Marmot City but it is a challenge to get the funding.

Parks work with 20 plus community groups to support the groups. They work to get external funding not accessible for Council. The Council rely heavily on Section 106 money to develop parks. There is no capital programme to speak of.

There are 400 open spaces in the city, so they have to be selective in the ones that are supported. Developing a management plan is a lengthy process. Public Health have supported the development of management plans for parks in areas of deprivation.

3. Age-friendly Cities

Anne reported that one of the main barriers for older people was concerns about safety and access to public toilets. In any consultation the top 4 things that come up are, presence on site, toilets, control of dogs and litter. In London they have looked at different ways of providing toilets.

Safety can be done in a number of ways - in designing the sites and getting more people into parks and encouraging greater use. Then, when people are in the park, there is lots going on. Start with existing groups and how they think and feel, what

their membership is and what issues they've identified. Seating, paths, simple things such as walking groups etc.

Manchester is an age-friendly city. Look to see what has been done there with parks.

4. Next steps

For the next meeting Members requested:

- Information on Section106 money available
- Look at how Longford have accessed additional money
- List of which parks have community groups associated with them
- More information about Manchester's age-friendly city work
- Invite a representative from Public Health to the next meeting.

5. Any other business

There was no other business.

The next meeting will take place on
17th November 2015 at 3-4pm in Committee Room 7

Meeting Three
Task and Finish Group – Parks Task and Finish Group
Notes of the meeting from 17th November 2015

Present:

Cllr Bigham

Cllr Lakha

Cllr Walsh

Anne Lakin – Chair of Coventry Older Voices

Kam Kaur – Age-friendly Cities

Graham Hood – Head of Green Space and Streetpride

Gennie Holmes – Scrutiny Co-ordinator

Hannah Watts – Public Health

Apologies: Cllr Lapsa

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Welcome, apologies and declarations of interest

2. Age-friendly Cities - Manchester

The age-friendly charter from Manchester was circulated. A request for information about what had been done in Manchester to encourage age-friendly parks had been made. When information is available this will be circulated.

3. Next steps

For the next meeting Members requested:

- Information on Section106 money available
- Look at how Longford have accessed additional money
- List of which parks have community groups associated with them
- More information about Manchester's age-friendly city work
- Invite a representative from Public Health to the next meeting.

4. Public Health

Hannah talked about her role and the link with Public Health and Place Directorate.. Valuing green spaces is a key priority under Marmot, creating health and sustainable communities. There is no additional funding to implement the Marmot principles and they have not had budgets for next year confirmed yet. However they are committed to working together to support the work. Hannah had a background in older people's social care so has an understanding of the needs of older people.

5. Friends Groups and others interested in local open space

Graham Hood had circulated information about all the local and community groups his team work with. Most of the groups are small and are reliant on a few key individuals so are vulnerable. They take a lot of support to keep them involved and active. Working with communities is a key priority for the local authority. He also talked about how they had linked with Public Health to develop management plans for parks in areas of deprivation, through support on the consultation process and potential funding. External funding needs an active community and consultation to

support it. The Community Development Service also works to support local community groups and they work alongside this team.

6. Section 106 monies

Graham Hood shared information about Section 106 money (S106). The money comes from developers and is part of the planning process. The money can be allocated for parks, highways and education. Parks receive a smaller contribution of about just of £1million. However this money will fluctuate depending on the number and scale of developments happening in the city.

There are very clear guidelines on what the money can be spent on, usually children's play facilities or sports facilities and within a clear geographical area.

Also maintenance of parks is a revenue cost which has to be met by the Council.

7. Next steps

To hear from Friends of Parks groups to see how they have worked to access funding. Also to try and focus on areas of Marmot priority.

The Older Peoples Voices group offered to support any Friends groups if they were looking to access external funding.

8. Any other business

There was no other business.

Meeting Four
Task and Finish Group – Parks Task and Finish Group
Notes of the meeting from 9th December 2015

Present:

Cllr Bigham	Tony Simons – Allesley Green Residents Association
Cllr Lakha	Colin Smith – Allesley Green Residents Association
Cllr Walsh	Michael Wileman – Friends of Canley Green Spaces
	Gennie Holmes – Scrutiny Co-ordinator
	Andrew Walster – Assistant Director, Streetscene and Greenspace
	Mark Yates – Parks Development Officer

Apologies: Cllrs Bigham, Lapsa

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Welcome, apologies and declarations of interest

2. Comments from Friends of Parks

Members heard that the Council supports around 30 Friends and community groups associated with green spaces across the city. It was explained that these kinds of groups can access sources of funding unavailable to the local authority. Examples given were Gosford Park Residents Association, who had accessed lottery funding for play equipment and Willenhall Rangers who had accessed Woodland Trust funding for tree planting.

Members heard about the work that community groups do in terms of supporting the community use and maintenance of the green spaces. They also heard from one of the Parks Development Officers about the support offered through the Council to community groups and friends groups.

Members of the task and finish group heard evidence from the representatives of 2 community groups that support green spaces in their local area. Members heard about the benefits of volunteering, especially about links with the University in Canley.

Members heard about some of the issues experienced by volunteer groups, with parks and green spaces, such as anti-social behaviour and sustaining membership. Volunteers were particularly downhearted when work they had done was affected by vandalism and anti-social behaviour such as drinking and fire starting.

The representatives from the two groups found it beneficial to be able to share information and experiences.

3. Next Steps

Members will meet to identify recommendations to the Cabinet Member, arising from the information provided.