

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure, Sports and Parks
held at 2.00 pm on Thursday, 21 April 2016

Present:

Members: Councillor A Khan (Cabinet Member)
 Councillor J Birdi (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Employees (by Directorate):

Place: C Hickin, G Hood, L Nagle, A Walster

Resources: G Holmes, U Patel

Public Business

41. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

42. Minutes

The minutes of the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure, Sports and Parks meeting held on 25 February 2016 were signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

43. Proposed Public Space Protection Order for Edgwick Park

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of Place which sought approval to create a Public Space Protection Order, under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 for Edgwick Park.

Concerns had been raised by agencies and echoed by the local community regarding congregations of people, mostly male in the park at various times of the day. Often there was alcohol being consumed which made local people reluctant to use the park and there was the risk of child sexual exploitation.

Edgwick Park is a relatively small park located in Foleshill Ward. It is bounded by the Foleshill Road, Eld Road and Cross Road and the Edgwick Community Primary School is also located within the Park. The park was designed to be a community park for use by families with children.

For some time it had been noted that groups of males have been congregating in the park, drinking alcohol and socialising. Partnership intelligence reported that groups of young people, particularly girls were attracted to the park to access alcohol from the group of young males. There were concerns that this was resulting in sexual exploitation. An alleged serious sexual assault occurred in the Summer of 2015, which whilst related to the park, did not actually occur in the park.

Community safety partnership resources were subsequently focused in this area. Police patrols in the park were increased along with dedicated youth workers. In addition, considerable landscaping works were undertaken to improve visibility for patrolling officers.

The Council consulted on the introduction of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 to prohibit congregations, or specific behaviours within the park. The wording of the PSPO was attached at Appendix One of the report. The consultation was supported by impact statements from partners and members of the public as attached at Appendix two. Breach of such an Order could result in a person being issued a Fixed Penalty Notice up to the value of £100. Should someone continually breach the PSPO, or if the breach was felt to be serious enough, then the matter could be referred to court where an increased fine of up to £1000, or a custodial sentence could be imposed.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure sports and Parks:

- 1. Notes that results of a recent public consultation along with supporting witness impact statements and agrees with the rationale for creating the Order.**
- 2. Approves that the Order should be created and effective at the earliest practical date.**
- 3. Requests that all partner agencies continue their current actions and patrol plans and also monitor the surrounding areas for any potential displacement of the issue.**

44. Recommendations from the Parks Task and Finish Group of the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of Place which detailed recommendations from the Parks Task and Finish Group of the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3).

At their informal meeting on 24 June 2015, the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) established a task and finish group to look at how Friends of parks groups could be supported to make parks and open spaces more age-friendly. The report introduced the recommendations identified by the task and finish group and the reasons behind them.

The group met on four occasions and heard information about age-friendly cities, Section 106 funding and also from representatives of two community groups, as well as visiting several park sites across the city.

The group also considered information presented by a variety of professionals, agencies, published research material and first hand experiences of friends groups. The information highlighted that the top priorities for older people when it came to public spaces were accessibility, such as suitable paths and walkways, feeling safe and access to public toilets.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure Sports and Parks delegates authority to the Head of Streetpride and Greenspace to incorporate the following principles into the review of the Council's existing Green Space Strategy:

1. To ensure that parks and open spaces are considered as the city moves towards becoming an age-friendly city;
2. That when resources are available, improvements to parks and open spaces should consider age-friendly requirements such as footpaths and safety/anti-social behaviour concern;
3. That support networks for Friends groups are supported by the Council both locally and regionally; and
4. To ensure that Section 106 agreements for green spaces are more flexible as to what can be funded on a specific site.

45. **Outstanding Issues Report**

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of Resources that identified those issues on which further reports had been requested and were outstanding so that progress could be monitored.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure Sports and Parks notes that the remaining outstanding issues will be forwarded to the appropriate Cabinet Member with relevant portfolio responsibility to consider in the New Municipal New.

46. **Any Other Business**

There were no other items of business.

(Meeting closed at 2.05 pm)