

## LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY

### Parks, Green Space and Countryside Stakeholder Panel Agenda

Date and Time: Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> of December 2016 7.00-9pm.

Location: Civic Centre, Committee Room 6

1. Welcome and Apologies
2. Minutes of previous meeting
3. idverde Update:
  - a. Update on Action Plan
4. LBB Update
5. Feedback from Stakeholders
6. AOB
7. Date of future meetings

| <u>Attendees 6<sup>th</sup> December</u>  | <u>Action</u> |
|---|---------------|
| <u>Councillors</u>  |               |
| Councillor Colin Smith<br>Councillor Huntington-Thresher  |               |
| <u>London Borough of Bromley</u>  |               |
| Dan Jones, Assistant Director Street Scene & Green Space<br>Robert Schembri, Contracts Manager<br>Jennifer Davis, Project Officer   |               |
| <u>idverde</u>  |               |
| Patrick Phillips, Director of Park Management Strategy<br>Frank Kleinhans, Contract Director  |               |
| <u>Stakeholders</u>   |               |
| Ishpi Blatchley, Countryside Consultative Panel /Bromley Biodiversity Partnership<br>Janet Clayton, Orpington and District Archaeological Society<br>Larry Herbert, Friends Forum |               |
| John Penney, Leisure Gardens and Allotments Federation<br>John Murray, Bowls Federation   |               |
| <u>Apologies</u>  |               |
| John Bosley, Head of Neighbourhood Management (Chairman)<br>Peter Woodward, Chislehurst Trustees<br>Judith John, Countryside Consultative Panel /Bromley Biodiversity Partnership |               |

### Actions List from 6<sup>th</sup> December 2016 Panel Meeting

|   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| <b>Biodiversity Manual</b> - Once executive sign off achieved in January/February, <i>idverde</i> to meet with Dr Judith John about courses. They will also engage with the Panel.  | <i>idverde</i>                |
| <b>Allotments Property Issue</b> – Dan to provide Cllr Smith with an update on property issues before the February Leisure Gardens and Allotments Consultative Panel meeting, and ensure a Property representative attends.             | LBB Dan Jones                 |
| <b>Costs to Friends Groups</b> – Cllr Smith requested a paper in regards to grants for Friends Groups before the next meeting.  | <i>idverde</i>                |
| <b>Neighbourhood Management Review</b> - Dan Jones to feedback to the Panel the results of this review.   | LBB Dan Jones                 |
| <b>Allotment Leases</b> - Dan Jones to provide a statement from LBB for next meeting on the 19 <sup>th</sup> January Federation (BALGF) internal meeting  | LBB Dan Jones                 |
| <b>Betts Park Canal</b> - Rob Schembri to feedback to Panel progress on this issue.   | LBB Rob Schembri              |
| <b>Succession Planning in regards to documentation</b> - Frank Kleinhans commented that <i>idverde</i> would look into this.  | <i>idverde</i> .              |
| <b>Playground Maintenance</b> - Rob Schembri to provide confirmation on Policy to Larry Herbert and the Friends Forum.  | LBB Rob Schembri              |
| <b>Bill for goggles to Friends Forum</b> - Larry Herbert informed the group that the FO Scadbury sent a bill to the Friends Forum for goggles. Cllr Smith asked that this issue is clarified  | Larry Herbert – Friends Forum |
| <b>Memorial Benches</b> – Patrick Phillips commented that <i>idverde</i> would review the policy in regards to the siting of benches within statutorily listed rural sites this with Robert Schembri.                                   | <i>idverde</i> /LBB           |
| <b>Ward Security</b> – Larry Herbert also highlighted a formal complaint that had been made against Ward Security in regards to the quality of the service they provide. Rob Schembri to raise this issue with the Enforcement manager. | LBB Rob Schembri              |

## **Minutes & Actions of the meeting**

### **Minutes of previous meeting**

Minutes of previous meeting agreed.

### **Health and Safety Booklet –**

Patrick Phillips confirmed that when the booklet is reviewed, the front cover image will be considered again; and that at the next reprint of the booklet, *idverde* would review all feedback/comments. Noted that this booklet is used nationally and that LBB should be proud of this achievement.

### **Biodiversity Manual-**

This is developed but slightly behind due to consolidation and single branding within *idverde*. The booklet needs executive sign off before it is then made bespoke for LBB, this will occur in January/February 2017. Once this is achieved, *idverde* to meet with Dr Judith John about courses. They will also engage with the Panel.

### **Stewardship –**

The Annual Biodiversity Action Plan s scheduled for publication within 2017.

### **Allotment Leases –**

Dan Jones informed the Panel there is a plan to renew all of the leases; this will go back to February Leisure Gardens and Allotments Consultative Panel.

John Penney highlighted that a LBB Property representative did not attend the last Allotments meeting, as promised, and they have not explained clearly what they require. Dan Jones informed the Panel that John Bosley had spoken to Property colleagues and would report back at the February meeting. Cllr Smith noted that he was unhappy with Property's approach and that he required an early briefing before the February Meeting. Dan Jones to action.

### **Annual Survey Information from Friends Groups –**

Concerns were raised as to the amount of information required for the Annual Survey Information to take place. Patrick Phillips highlighted to the Panel that this information is required from Friends Groups as useful and required base data for potential funding bodies - in addition to being a required key performance indicator for LB Bromley and has already been significantly simplified for 2017.

Larry Herbert raised the issue of the £100 payment to Friends to attain information of this kind; that it had been agreed that the Forum would cover this for this year (received 27 out of 45 replies), costing the Forum £2700 to date. Larry questioned whether this information is really required; and whether the Friends Groups should receive the same financial support as before?

Patrick Phillips highlighted to the group that the Friends receive the same financial support,

however this may be received in a different way, such as though payment for Insurance etc.

Cllr Smith stated that this needs to be carefully considered, as LBB cannot impose costs on Friends Groups. He requested a paper for discussion at the next Panel meeting.

### **Parks Designation/ Local Plan –**

Larry Herbert raised concerns in regards to the feedback given to applicants by LB Bromley Planning department as to why their requests were declined. Ishpi Blatchley informed the group that feedback can be found in the Local Plan Consultation Document. However concerns were also raised about the amount of time provided for the consultation period, and subsequent applications.

Cllr Huntington-Thresher commented that the timescales were compressed, and that comments on the Local Plan would have to be submitted before the end of the year.

Cllr Smith also highlighted that comments were critical as multiple builders are attempting to provide compelling cases for housing/commercial developments. It is therefore important that objections/comments are noted now to have an impact.

### **Hedgerows – Ishpi Blatchley updated the Panel on behalf of Dr Judith John.**

Dr Judith John spoke to relevant groups to produce a paper on the correct management of Hedgerows. She met with Craig Langford and Andy Hodgson (*idverde* General Managers) on the 30<sup>th</sup> August; and it has been agreed that this plan would apply to all hedgerows except those which pose a health & safety risk etc. Frank Kleinhans confirmed that hedgerow management is included in the two year plan, and would be assessed at the end of the two year period. Larry Herbert added that the Friends Forum website has posters available for download explaining why hedgerows were being managed this way.

### **Volunteer Attendance -**

The issue of supervision for volunteers at High Elms, and the negative impact on volunteer attendance raised at the previous meeting was addressed. Frank Kleinhans confirmed that *idverde* have now implemented a back fill strategy to deal with this. Frank also highlighted that *idverde* were considering their approach to seasonal staff, and attempting to establish a more permanent workforce to assist with this issue.

Ishpi Blatchley confirmed this had improved.

### **idverde Update**

- *idverde* looking to provide digital platform for event hire with an online process developing, now pushed to Quarter 4. Bromley Biodiversity Plan – the next step will be to allocate resources, *idverde* looking to do this in January/February time next year.

### **Bowie Bandstand –**

- The crowd funding for this project ends this week, however it is unlikely that this exercise and other sources of funds to date will meet the required target. It is likely that the Friends in conjunction with idverde will apply for other grants, such as an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund, but this may require an external fundraiser, which would increase costs.
- idverde has re-established their seat on the Proactive Bromley meetings. Cllr Smith made it clear that LBB did not wish to discourage the Health Agenda in anyway, but to note that there are no spare funds from existing budgets to divert to it; any new funds must therefore be sought from the relevant Health and Wellbeing Board sources.
- idverde have completed an infrastructure survey on Parks assets.
- The volunteer task force working group has been established and will make a presentation to the Friends Forum open meeting in January 2017.

### **Hay Cuts -**

Patrick Phillips highlighted that idverde are currently looking at undertaking a pricing exercise to consider further. idverde will be providing a quotation for cut and clearing the former meadows at Scadbury, currently within the farmland and subject to LBB authorisation. A Committee Report will go to Environment PDS in January.

### **LBB update**

Dan reiterated to the Panel that on the 16th May 2016 the Neighbourhood Management system was implemented. There are now three Neighbourhood Managers, Rob Schembri covering the West of the Borough, Jim Cowan Central, and Bob Edwards in the East. A review of this structure is to commence shortly, feedback from staff is good, Dan Jones to provide feedback to the Panel the results of this review.

### **Allotments Leases –**

John Penney highlighted to the group that at the last Leisure Gardens and Allotments Consultative Panel meeting a view was expressed to John Bosley that LBB were not providing positive involvement and engagement in regards to leases. Dan Jones to provide a statement from LBB for next meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> January (Federation (BALGF) internal meeting).

### **Betts Park Canal –**

Rob Schembri is dealing with issues in regards to Betts Park Canal. Further investigation to begin in January 2017.

### **Environmental Services Contracts 2019 –**

Currently a procurement exercise is underway to renew environmental services contracts from 2019 onwards, a report is going to Committee in January 2017 and February PDS, the Panel will be kept updated as to the progress of this.

Cllr Smith noted that in regards to bids in 2019, through potential savings LB Bromley could award to a 'super contractor' but that the Council are also looking at individual packages too. There is a balance between quality and cost, and the importance of maintaining Bromley's service standards. This is all being considered carefully.

### Feedback from Stakeholders

#### **Bowls-**

Currently an issue around fox damage to greens and the club are considering whether pesticides or other options may protect the asset. Cllr Smith noted that LBB is keen to protect the environment, whilst a balance was needed, and options will need to be considered carefully.

#### **Scadbury -**

Janet Clayton informed the group that she is very pleased with the work of *idverde's* Andrew Harvey, the Community Manager; and the Management Plan for Scadbury. Options for funding in regards to a conservation survey undertaken at Scadbury would need to be considered.

#### **Biodiversity –**

Ishpi Blatchley highlighted to the Panel that there are no longer walks leaflets at High Elms; Frank Kleinhans commented that *idverde* would look into this.

In regards to Biodiversity volunteers have been working with the London Wildlife trust and GLA for their audit. Ishpi highlighted that this was a huge amount of work, and took a great deal of volunteer time to provide, historic documents were in paper form, and not stored correctly, and may have been lost if volunteers had not documented them. This audit highlighted issues around hedgehog species and Hedgerows, it was commented that the *idverde* Hedgerow management plan should assist with this. Frank Kleinhans commented that *idverde* would learn from this and develop succession planning to avoid this happening in the future

Janet Clayton highlighted that this may be a concern for the 2019 contracts and needs to be considered carefully. Jennifer Davis to raise this issue with Commissioning Team.

Cllr Smith noted that in the future, whilst audits such as this are important, the GLA will have to provide funding for the work to be completed if resources are not available.

#### **Friends Forum -**

Larry Herbert raised the issue of photocopying at libraries for friends groups, Dan Jones instructed the Panel there has been no change in policy in regards to this; Patrick Phillips informed the Panel that Steven Tickner is the best contact to move this forward.

The issue was raised in regards to the playground at Whitehall recreation ground, £25k has been raised, but friends are unclear on the policy in regards to future maintenance liabilities.

Cllr Smith noted that for any new equipment installed, such as this, the Council cannot afford to maintain it. Rob Schembri to provide confirmation on Policy to Larry Herbert and the Friends

Forum.

Larry Herbert informed the group that the FO Scadbury sent a bill to the Friends for goggles. Cllr Smith asked that this issue is clarified by The Forum

**Memorial Benches –**

The issue was raised by Larry Herbert that in some rural and countryside parks, memorial benches have been placed in inappropriate locations, without consultation.

Patrick Phillips commented that idverde would review the policy in regards to this with Robert Schembri.

**Ward Security –**

Larry Herbert also highlighted a formal complaint that had been made against Ward Security in regards to the quality of the service they provide. Rob Schembri to raise this issue with the Enforcement manager.

**Next Meeting**

To be arranged by Jennifer Davis for May 2017.