

LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY

Parks, Green Space and Countryside Stakeholder Panel Agenda

Date and Time: Thursday 5th of July 2018 - 7.00 – 9:00 pm.

Location: Civic Centre, Council Chamber

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

Attendees 5th July

Councillors

- Councillor Kira Gabbert

London Borough of Bromley (LBB)

- John Bosley (JB) - Assistant Director of Environmental Services (Chairman)
- Helen Stickling (HS) - Graduate Intern

idverde

- Patrick Phillips (PP) - Director of Park Management Strategy
- Martin Walker (MW) - Contract Manager

Stakeholders

- Dr Judith John (JJ) – *Orpington Field Club and Bromley Biodiversity Partnership (BBP).*
- Janet Clayton (JC) - *Orpington and District Archaeological Society (ODAS).*
- Larry Herbert (LH) - *Friends Forum.*
- Peter Woodward (PW) - *Chislehurst Trustees.*
- John Penney (JP) - *Leisure Gardens and Allotments Federation.*
- Michael Sanders (MS) - *Bromley Council Bowling Club Association (BCBCA).*

Apologies

- Frank Kleinhans (FK) - *idverde Contract Director*
- Councillor William Huntington-Thresher
- James Hilsden (JH) - *LBB Neighbourhood Manager (West area)*
- Ishpi Blatchley (IB) - *Countryside Consultative Panel / Bromley Biodiversity Partnership.*

Actions List from 5th July 2018 Panel Meeting

<p>Planning & Biodiversity - John Bosley to take this issue forward, include James Hilsden and liaise with Planning.</p>	<p><i>JB</i></p>
<p>Idverde contact list – idverde to circulate electronic copies of the updated contact list.</p>	<p><i>idverde</i></p>
<p>Fly Tipping Guidance Protocol - LBB enforcement team to produce a guidance protocol of what to do when fly-tipping is discovered - to be circulated to stakeholders.</p> <p>Also to include Abandoned Vehicles Protocol.</p>	<p>Toby Smith</p>
<p>Grass strimming causing tree damage - LBB and idverde to discuss this issue at the next monthly contract meeting and PP to consider alternatives beforehand.</p>	<p>James Hilsden</p>
<p>BCBCA and LBB Communications (action in progress) –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MS to send JB a report on the 9 outstanding BCBCA issues. • JB to consider how to facilitate more effective communications with BCBCA. 	<p>MS and JB</p>

Minutes & Actions of the meeting

Minutes of previous meeting

Allotment Fencing Repairs – JP confirmed that this issue has now been resolved.

Planning & Biodiversity – JB said this is an ongoing issue. John Bosley to take this issue forward, include James Hilsden and liaise with Planning.

Environmental Services Specification (Lot 4) - JB said that the Specifications were public documents through the advertisement period however may now need to be controlled. JB said that stakeholders can request from HS if they would like to read relevant sections of the Specifications who can investigate.

Fly Tipping Guidance Protocol – JB reported that an internal fly-tipping working group has been organised to start soon which aims to investigate proactive solutions to fly-tipping. JB urged stakeholders to report occurrences so that intelligence can be collected.

PW discussed an incident where a vehicle had been somewhat abandoned but had the correct paper work so wasn't technically abandoned. PW said it would be helpful to know who needs to be notified in circumstances such as this.

GDPR – LH and PW discussed making use of the Community Links course and cited it as useful. LH discussed that he had not received any specific direction from idverde or LBB regarding GDPR. PW discussed that assistance from the council is appreciated.

Scadbury Park Fencing – PP reported that it has been agreed which fencing will be used and that the works are currently being procured. PP said that he was hopeful that the works could start during the summer holidays. JC said this is good as the summer holidays are when the fencing will be needed the most.

Cllr Gabbert raised a separate fencing issue at Scadbury Park, in that the fencing which is situated around the wider park (through the woodlands) needs restoring and could be a health and safety risk. PP and JB discussed that restoring this fencing would be capital works and would need to be addressed under part of the larger strategic vision for the park. JC highlighted that the fencing in question does help to keep quadbikes out of the woods so does serve some benefit.

idverde Update

Environmental Services Contracts 2019 - PP updated that idverde have put in a tender submission for LBB's Lot 4 - Parks Management & Grounds Maintenance contract and are waiting to hear an outcome.

Staff - PP circulated a print out of the new idverde structure with updated contact detail. Idverde to circulate electronic copies of the updated contact list. PP introduced Martin Walker, the new idverde Contract Manager who is replacing Craig Langford. MW explained that he is currently in his induction phase and will be operating side by side with Craig until the end of the July. PP said that Craig is not leaving the company. MW said that he previously worked for Hounslow local authority and has experience delivering Park Management, Libraries, Open Spaces, Cemeteries, Arboriculture and Grounds Maintenance.

Action Plan - PP informed the Panel that the action plan is not currently available on the website for procurement purposes.

Green Flag - PP discussed the upcoming awards ceremony for the 6 Green Flag submissions. PP said that

idverde hope to maintain 3 Green Flag awards and receive 3 new ones.

Management Plans for Parks - PP updated the Panel that idverde have been developing a series of management plans for each park in the borough. He said that they have been using the Forestry Commission as guidance for countryside parks and the Green Flag template largely for urban parks.

Chislehurst Recreation Ground - PP updated the Panel that there is going to be a construction of a new pavilion and café unveiled at Chislehurst Recreation Ground during September.

Biomass Project - PP updated the Panel that the Biomass project is currently on hold due to problems with larger vehicle access which has caused issues of viability to the project.

Grass strimming causing tree damage - Attendees discussed the issue of trees being damaged during grass-strimming which was discussed at the previous meeting. PP and MW said that they believe this issue to be a result of human error. The attendees discussed the use of strimmer guards to prevent damage to trees. JB explained that you can have guards on the strimmer or guards which surround the tree however both of these cost money. PP said that they will continue to try and prevent this problem by reinforcing the message in toolbox talks and other training opportunities. PP also said that staff will be disciplined appropriately if found to have damaged trees during grass strimming. PP mentioned that it is more of an issue on highway verges than in parks, JB discussed that this may be due to the high volume of area that has to be covered.

PP and JB explained that idverde are willing to discuss strimming routines within specified parks with stakeholders (which could result in locally modified specifications) in an attempt to mitigate this issue. PP gave the example that idverde had liaised with the Kelsey Park Friends group and agreed to reduce strimming in the park. JJ suggested that grass strimming may not need to occur around larger trees as the shade of the tree reduces the speed of grass growth beneath.

LBB and idverde to discuss the above at next monthly contract meeting and PP to consider alternatives beforehand.

LBB update

Environmental Services Contracts 2019 – JB updated the attendees that the evaluation stage of the Environment Services (Lots 1- 4) tenders had just finished. LH and PW discussed concerns of a decrease in the quality of the services if a new company (not idverde) is awarded the new contract.

Neighbourhood Managers – John Bosley gave apologies that the new Neighbourhood Manager, James Hilsden, was unable to attend the meeting. JB gave some updates from JH including seasonal bedding which has been suffering in the warm weather and plans to replace it with more heat-resistant flowers.

Grass Verges - JB discussed an issue involving an area of grass verges which are owned by TFL which have not been appropriately maintained. JB discussed how very long grass can become a health and safety issue when grass obstructs visibility for drivers. The attendees discussed the benefits that long grass can have for biodiversity. JB discussed his opinion that longer grass in rural areas can be very fitting however around more residential areas it can look unkempt which can attract complaints. PW discussed that perimeter cuts can be a good method to show the public that the grass is being maintained and has been purposefully left to grow for the benefit of biodiversity. JB agreed that educating the public as to why grass is left to grow can be advantageous.

JB said that once the new contract has commenced that it could be a possibility in the future to gradually reduce the amount of grass verge strimming that occurs in certain areas.

Feedback from Stakeholders

Friends Forum - (Larry Herbert)

LH updated the attendees that the Friends Forum had sent John Pemberton an email regarding training opportunities they would like to see this year. He updated that the Forum runs first aid courses and had run an IT course. He said that the Forum has put forward their budget and idverde had agreed to pay their annual grant.

Enforcement – LH raised issues of overnight fishing taking place at Keston and the issue of the lack of toilet facilities. JB explained that available Ward resources are currently caught up dealing with traveller incursions. JB said that there has also been unsavoury activity occurring in the Church House gardens.

Ethelbert Close – LH said that the Friends Forum strongly oppose the planning application and have written to the council regarding this.

Orpington and District Archaeological Society (ODAS) - (Janet Clayton)

Janet Clayton said that she had spoken to Amy Rogers (idverde) earlier today to better understand the current progress of the Scadbury Park projects. JC requested an update on the proposed timeline of the Scadbury projects which include the fencing procurement, the Conservation Accredited Professional (CAP) procurement, the Priority Conservation works procurement and the project of considering a larger strategy of the park. The attendees discussed how works cannot be done on the Moated Manor during the winter. JC expressed a desire to have more regular updates regarding the Scadbury Park projects. JC wanted to clarify the financial security from Historic England and LBB in the upcoming year.

PP said that investigating a larger strategy for the Park as a whole will probably be a project that is addressed during the new contract. PP and JB advised JC that Amy Rogers is the best person to speak to regarding the various Scadbury projects however JB offered that if anyone would ever like an update regarding the above, that they can email himself or James Hilsden.

Chislehurst Trustees - (Peter Woodward)

Peter Woodward said that they had received assistance from Julian Fowgies (LBB Arboriculture Manager) recently. JB informed the attendees that sadly, Julian has handed in his notice to LBB and will be leaving on the 10th of August.

PW discussed the investment Chislehurst Trustees had made in having large quantities of non-native Oak Processionary moth nests removed. PW said that they had spoken with the National Trust who had not found any nests in neighbouring land. PW also said that no nests had been found in Scadbury Park either. PW theorised that the moths could be spreading with assistance from the St Pauls Cray road.

PW also wanted to report on the help that Amy Rogers and Allison John-Pandya from idverde had supplied in putting together a bid to restore the pond.

Bromley Council Bowling Club Association (BCBCA) - (Michael Sanders)

Michael Sanders raised the concern of ineffective communications from LBB. MS highlighted that he has 9 outstanding actions to resolve. MS to send JB a report on the 9 outstanding issues. JB said he could look in to the commonalities to understand what the blockers are and how things could be reported on to prompt regular updates from LBB. JB to consider how to facilitate more effective communications with BCBCA.

Countryside Consultative Panel / Bromley Biodiversity Partnership (BBP) - (Dr Judith John)

Dr Judith John informed the attendees that Ishpi Blatchley and herself have been working with Paul Mellor (LBB) regarding updating planning conditions for biodiversity. JJ updated that a document with suggestions is currently with other species & habitats group committee members and 'Bromley Friends of the Earth' for comment before being sent on to Paul Mellor.

JJ updated the attendees that comments were sent regarding the draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) document which was out for consultation in the spring (consultation closed 10th May).

JJ informed the Panel that two more rare species (House Sparrows and Purple Emperor Butterflies) were added to the BBP sub-group citizen science project to collect records of numbers. She updated that many records have been so far received, particularly for house sparrows. JJ updated that possible sightings of Purple Emperor Butterflies have been reported which is exciting news as they were thought extinct in Kent in the late 1980's.

JJ informed the panel that the BBP ran a stall at Keston Countryside Day where they promoted gardening for wildlife and asking people to plant some native species in their gardens in the light of recent publications regarding invertebrate loss. JJ discussed the publication of Germany Hallmann et al. 2017 which recorded a 75% decline in biomass of flying insects in 27 years (1989-2016) within 63 areas protected for nature conservation. JJ highlighted that the situation is unlikely to be any better in the UK, since the reduction in the number of dead insects on windscreens and headlamps following motorway journeys over the last 30-40 years is very obvious. JJ said the decline in invertebrates has a knock on effect on numbers of birds, bats and other animals.

JJ updated the attendees that Wildlife Gardening Advice regarding ponds, hedgerows and 'meadows' will shortly be available on the Bromley Friends Forum website.

JJ emphasised that if anyone ever needs advice on biodiversity issues that the BBP can assist.

Leisure Gardens and Allotments Federation – (John Penney)

John Penney informed the Panel that the new lease which was promised for the last summer is getting very near to the end. He said that legal people are very much involved and reported that there will be a meeting with members in a fortnight's time.

JP discussed a person who was storing timber on the Dorset road site and whom they believed could have been potentially conducting commercial business on site. JP said that the individual have been working on the site for 18-20 years. JP discussed a revised constitution and a proposed secret ballot. JB said that PP is supporting with this issue and LBB are advising in the background.

Next Meeting

To be arranged by Helen Stickling.