

SCRUTINY PROGRESS MONITORING REPORT ON : FRIENDS GROUPS

To provide progress in implementing recommendations of the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee from its scrutiny project work on Friends Groups – approved at **Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee (19 September, 2017 – Minute No. 19)**.

These recommendations were considered by **Cabinet on 14 November, 2017**, where it was resolved:

That Cabinet receives with thanks the report and recommendations of the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee and commissions a corporate officer working group to consider the resource implications to the Council of implementing the Committee’s recommendations, and to report this considered position back to the Committee and Cabinet for further review and final decision. (Minute No. 81)

Recommendation 1 - That an up-to-date data base of friends of groups’ contacts is maintained by officers and that all friends of groups are given defined points of contact at the council to facilitate streamlined, effective and accountable channels of communication between groups and the council.				
Action	Responsibility / Implementation by:	Resources Needed / Available	Target Date	Achievement / Completed
As per recommendation	Assistant Director – Commercial Services / Manager of Environmental Services	Existing resources	31 July 2018	Complete – the Green Spaces have an up to date list of contact details for Friends Groups Friends groups have defined points of contact within the Green Spaces team – these being John Ramsey Principal Green Space Officer Strategic, Gary McCarthy Principal Green Space Officer Operational and Sarah Poulton Green Space Development Team Leader.

Recommendation 2 - That the Friends of Groups information pack is reviewed and updated to provide:

- Guidance on developing a new group or joining an existing group
- Guidance on developing aims, constitutions, management committees and financial arrangements
- Advice and tips for key management committee roles including the chair, secretary and treasurer
- Tips for keeping the members of the friends of group, local community and council updated including social media and links to council publications, social media and websites
- Basic insurance and risk management advice
- Advice on developing an action plan
- Templates and examples of key documents to assist groups
- Where to go for help and support including Chesterfield Borough Council and Links CVS

Action	Responsibility / Implementation by:	Resources Needed / Available	Target Date	Achievement / Completed
As per recommendation	Assistant Director – Commercial Services / Manager of Environmental Services	Within resources	31/10/18	80% complete – the model documents are nearing completion – currently sat with the councils PR section to convert from basic word documents into use Friendly documents for hosting on the Councils website and distribution to existing Friends Groups. They made available at our inception meeting with Friends of Groups planned in March (see recommendation 6).

Recommendation 3 - That an annual survey with Friends Groups be carried out to collect information on their activities and achievements to enable the council to see how their work is contributing to the delivery of the council's objectives, as set out in the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy

Action	Responsibility / Implementation by:	Resources Needed / Available	Target Date	Achievement / Completed
As per recommendation	Assistant Director – Commercial Services / Manager of Environmental Services. Green spaces team	Within resources	31/12/18	The survey is currently being designed. This will be an agenda item at the inception meeting with Friends of Groups planned in March (see recommendation 6).

Recommendation 4 - That the council encourage and support friends of groups to develop a plan for their park or open space. This plan should be developed in consultation with both the council and the local community and should clearly set out both the group's and council's role in developing the park or open space

Action	Responsibility / Implementation by:	Resources Needed / Available	Target Date	Achievement / Completed
As per recommendation	Assistant Director – Commercial Services / Manager of Environmental Services	Within resources	31/12/18	Masterplans are in place for those sites where we have an active Friends Group. Overtime they can and do evolve in response to other windfall opportunities that may arise.

Recommendation 5 - That in addition to the support within recommendations 2 and 3, the council's policy and communications service work with the green spaces team and friends of groups to develop case study material for Chesterfield Borough Council led promotional opportunities including Your Chesterfield (the Council's magazine that goes to all homes in Chesterfield borough), the website and social media channels

Action	Responsibility / Implementation by:	Resources Needed / Available	Target Date	Achievement / Completed
As per recommendation	Assistant Director – Commercial Services / Manager of Environmental Services	Within existing resources	31/12/18	Not started – we have numerous examples of projects and activities that have been documented in the writing along with photographs. A format will be developed to give examples of capital projects and revenue activities with materials that already exist.

Recommendation 6 - That a bi-annual friends groups' forum is re-established to share key messages, best practice, increase networking and support and to enable the work of the friends groups to be shared and celebrated with a wider audience.

Action	Responsibility / Implementation by:	Resources Needed / Available	Target Date	Achievement / Completed
As per recommendation	Assistant Director – Commercial Services / Manager of Environmental Services	Within resources	10/5/19	A relaunch of the FROGS network (Friends of Groups) is to take place with an inaugural meeting planned for Tuesday 19 March.

Recommendation 7 - That a working group be established to assist with the delivery of the recommendations within the report.

Action	Responsibility / Implementation by:	Resources Needed / Available	Target Date	Achievement / Completed
As per recommendation	Assistant Director – Commercial Services / Manager of Environmental Services	Within resources	10/5/18.	Complete - the working group consists of the Environmental Services Manager (Shirley Hallam), Green Spaces Strategy Officer (John Ramsey), Green Spaces Delivery Officer (Gary McCarthy) and Green Spaces Development Team Leader (Sarah Poulton).