



**Brighton & Hove
City Council**

**ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT &
SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE
ADDENDUM**

4.00PM, TUESDAY, 19 JANUARY 2016

THE RONUK HALL, PORTSLADE TOWN HALL

ADDENDUM

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WRITTEN QUESTIONS

(i) Freshfield Road pedestrian crossing- Faye Bridgwater

“Queens Park residents have been campaigning for a pedestrian crossing on Freshfield Rd to address serious dangers posed, including to children of St Luke’s, Queens Park and Carlton Hill Schools.

Over 40% of St Luke’s parents participated in a survey, of whom: 82% have safety concerns; 34% have witnessed an accident; 12% have been involved in an accident. We have met with councillors and have been assured the proposals would be shared.

We request the committee ask officers to meet us to discuss the plans as a starting point to be developed with community engagement rather than a yes/no proposal”.

19 January 2016

Brighton & Hove City Council

DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting of the Council for the hearing of deputations from members of the public. Each deputation may be heard for a maximum of five minutes.

Deputations received:

- (i) **Deputation:** Cityparks Rangers and their importance to our environment, a volunteer perspective

My name is Cliff Munn, I am here today, with colleagues, to represent a deputation of Cityparks Ranger volunteers. Over the last few years we have collectively given time every week to working with Cityparks Rangers in support of the Council's objectives for our city. The Appendix to this document provides a view of both the work we have done and the locations involved. It gives a limited view of the breadth of responsibility carried by our rangers when working with people like us.

What's inspired up our deputation today is the news that the Council is considering a 60% cut in ranger numbers; effectively reducing their number from 9 to 3. Our objective is to increase your understanding and appreciation of their role, together with the value add they provide. I really hope after hearing from us, you will look again at these proposed reductions, which we feel are disproportionate compared to other areas.

All of us supporting this deputation are long term and proud city residents. We express this pride by telling friends and family what an amazing place it is. My strap line is 'we have a fabulous blend of environments - a vibrant city, the sea and easy access to amazing urban and downland green spaces'. We really do live in a world class environment, and one now with UNESCO Biosphere Reserve status! Where else can you jump on a bus in a city centre and in 15 minutes be enjoying internationally important landscapes?

One of my volunteer roles is as one of our 120+ conservation grazing sheep 'lookers'. We've been conservation grazing for some years now, from Benfield Valley to Beacon Hill – around 20 sites. These sites are all within our city boundary and are designated as nationally and internationally important landscapes. In terms of bio-diversity our city's chalk downland is as rich as the tropical rain forests. As well as these sites being wonderful to visit and enjoy, they are also used as a source of chalk downland wild flower seeds. Volunteers are engaged to harvest these seeds and then plant them out on newly created butterfly banks and verges, thus bringing downland flowers and wildlife right into the city. One of our sites has even been used as a collection point by the UK Millennium Seedbank for representative chalk downland wild flower seeds!

So there's just one example, all of this grazing and harvesting and planting activity is managed by our 9 rangers, supported by us volunteers. It's also been cleverly financed, using English Nature cash rather than Council Tax income. It's just one of the items included in our Appendix illustrating how rangers utilise volunteers. And that list is by no means exhaustive.

Green spaces don't look after themselves. There's a comprehensive strategy to care for them, to improve them and to make them accessible to all; and it's our rangers

that deliver this strategy. They can't physically do it all themselves, but they are extremely good at mobilising volunteers like us – and keeping us engaged. They also work with local community groups, local businesses and engage resources from Community Payback and South Downs National Park. I'm involved with three volunteer groups myself, but there are numerous others across our city that the rangers co-ordinate. Left alone, most of these groups would probably cease to function. Volunteers need a safe workplace, they can't afford insurance and don't have the means to access, repair and store tools, or get them to the sites on volunteer days. Not only do our rangers ensure volunteer activity is aligned to a strategy, their presence and practical experience is indispensable.

We are really worried that the proposed 60% cut on this already very small team, will have profound consequences. For example, if we stop managing our downland spaces, they will over grow, return to scrub and years of investment will be lost. We're concerned too that in a rush to make cutbacks, imaginative ways of making the ranger service more commercial have not been explored. We have considered some ideas!

Going back to the pride we have in our city. We strongly believe our green spaces are one of the three key ingredients that make Brighton & Hove so special; and that these green spaces are hugely dependent on a small but very effective and dedicated team of rangers, working alongside the community. We really hope this committee can find a way forward which will enable them to continue delivering well into the future.

Deputation by:

Cliff Munn (Lead Spokesperson),

Vivienne Barton

Fiona Bower

Catherine Yeats

Margaret Lester

Jamie Burston

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Example Ranger lead volunteer conservation tasks	City Locations
Coppicing Hazel and Sweet Chestnut	Stanmer Park
Building Hazel fences to protect wildlife areas	Stanmer Park, Waterhall
Clearing poisonous Rag Wort	Wild Park, Bevendean Down, Waterhall
Scrub clearance to remove invasive species	Waterhall, Stanmer Park, Wild Park, Craven Vale, Wilson Avenue +
Pond conservation (including woven barriers)	Preston Park & Waterhall
Harvesting chalk downland wild flower seeds	Castle Hill, Bevendean Down, Beacon Hill, Ladies Mile
Planting wild flower plugs and seeds on butterfly banks and verges	Sheepcote Valley, Whitehawk Estate, Woodingdean Cemetery +
Weeding flower beds in city parks	St Anne's Wells Park, Preston Park, Hangleton Park
Erection and movement of electric fences to contain conservation grazing sheep	Beacon Hill, Wild Park Lewes Road, Green Ridge + other grazing sites
Daily sheep looking duties (trained lookers only)	Sheepcote Valley, Beacon Hill, Benfield Valley,
Moving sheep between grazing compartments	Green Ridge, Wild Park + other grazing sites
Planting trees to improve local biodiversity	Craven Vale, Stanmer Park, Whitehawk Orchard
Building paths and steps to improve access	Withdean Woods, Craven Vale, Crowhurst Corner, Wild Park
Clearance and planting of Gorse	Hollingbury Hill, Wild Park
Installing signage to inform visitors of conservation activity and access	Wild Park, Bevendean Down, 19 Acres, Ladies Mile
Helping with restoration of flint boundary walls	Stanmer Park
Repair, preparation. erection and removal of permanent fencing	Sheepcoat Valley, Whitehawk Camp, Wild Park
Litter and fly tipping removal	Craven Vale, Crowhurst Corner, Wild Park, East Brighton Park +



Ranger Neil Doyle (far left) with one of the many volunteer groups managed by Cityparks Rangers

