

Public Questions and Statements – Charity Trustee Sub-Committee

Meeting Date: 25/11/24

Questions (Published Agenda)

From: **Caroline Dewar, Friends of Graves Park**

Question: **Regarding the Restoration of the next section of the Norton Nurseries in Graves Park back to parkland by Friends of Graves Park Volunteers:**

Bearing in mind that FOGP are committed to funding the restoration, with no cost to the council and that the land identified is virtually unused and should not affect the council running an unlicensed depot from the used part of the site, will the Charity Sub-committee please, urgently, agree to land for the next section of Chantreyland Meadow and Arboretum (as identified in the questions of 22-1-24) being released to Friends of Graves Park with immediate effect, for fencing off while being restored back to parkland, then once complete, reopened to public use, as first ordered by the Charity Commission in 1998, thus going some way to restoring the council's position with the Charity Commission?

And:

Can the Charity Subcommittee guarantee that plans to bring the greenhouses back into use won't adversely affect the Friends of Graves Park's long-standing request to restore the Norton Nurseries site back to parkland and that the proposed use won't include any use of the next section for the proposed arboretum, nor adversely affect the FOGP volunteers' storage of equipment on site?

Response:

1. Various answers provided by the Sub-Committee during 2022, 2023, and early 2024 confirmed that the land was required to maintain Graves Park. These answers also confirmed that there was an on-going review across the city to look for alternative solutions to all its operational depot facilities and Norton Nurseries was being considered in this review.

At the Sub-Committee meeting dated 16.7.2024, it was agreed that a specific review relating to the use of the Norton Nursery would be undertaken.

The land is currently in use operationally and required to maintain the park.

The report being presented today at Committee provides an update on the Council's review of its use of Norton Nurseries.

Officers have committed to completing the work as thoroughly and quickly as possible and this Sub-Committee will ensure it remains updated throughout. Options will be presented at this Sub-Committee once they are available with the target date being the next CTSC on 21st January 2025.

2. Food Works have been on site for several weeks now and we are not aware of any issues between their bringing the glasshouses back into use in order to grow food and the Friends access to storage. The room used by the Friends for storage was of course **not** included in the Food Works lease. There is no reason to assume that the ongoing use of the glasshouses will impact on the current or proposed access to any other parts of the Norton Nurseries site.

NOTE: No remit questions, statements or petitions were received for this meeting.