

**Minutes of the Meeting of the GreenSpace South West Group
Wednesday 26th July 2006 at 12.30pm
Livestock Centre, Exeter**

		Actions
1.	Present	
	Peter Wilkinson – Bristol CC (Chair) Sarah Moore – GreenSpace (minutes) Paul Faulkner – Exeter CC Naomi Wright – Countryside Agency (CA) Adrian Cook – Mid Devon DC Karen Hughes – Taunton Deane BC Nick Jones – Plymouth CC Bob Hussey – Kennet DC Michael Rowland – Bournemouth BC Richard Taylor – Torbay Council Lindsay Evans – Torbay Council Len Croney – Pengelly Consulting Debbie Moseley – South Somerset BC Chris Cooper – South Somerset BC Mark Pollard – East Devon DC Davog Mcklusky – English Nature Carl Dallison – Weymouth & Portland BC Tara Golding – Weymouth & Portland BC Mark Pollard – East Devon DC Mike Vine – East Devon DC	
2.	Apologies	
	Rachael Young – Cornwall County Council	
3.	Meeting	
	1. Welcome & Introductions	
1.1	PW welcomed everyone to the meeting, and introduced Naomi Wright from the CA. PW thanked PF for hosting the meeting.	

	<p>2. Minutes of the last meeting</p> <p>2.1 TAES: PW informed the group that a second meeting has been held to develop the 'Towards An Excellent Service' quality assurance model. The model aims to rate parks services against certain criteria, which link to the cultural block. The model is at its final stages before being tested, Cornwall County Council and Carrick DC are the two pilot authorities in the region. PW & LC offered to present the model to the group later in the year.</p> <p>2.2 CABE Space Update:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parkforce campaign worked with Bristol City Council to undertake research. The campaign aims to increase the number of site based staff. Taunton Deane BC & Bournemouth BC will be pilot authorities from the region, along with Wakefield, Stoke and Crawley. The pilot will be to implement the model, consider the issues, design new systems and identify funding opportunities to develop best practice case studies. 120 LA's have signed up to the campaign. 2. Julia Thrift (CABE Space Director) has now left and a new Director will be appointed. 3. Leaders Programme is likely to be held in Bristol in February 2007. RT commented that it was an excellent programme, well run and mentored. 4. New Publication 'Making contracts work for wildlife' produced. <p>2.3 ANEC consortium for BIG lottery funding has yet to be confirmed, a likely target will be areas with a high population and high deprivation.</p> <p>2.4 Community Spaces bid has been made, again no news available yet.</p> <p>2.5 Love Parks Week was a highly successful PR campaign, although some members of the group felt that too many emails were sent out. SM highlighted that each day is themed covering different topic areas – aiming to provide information and raise awareness of the cross cutting themes that link to parks.</p>	
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	National Forum Update:	
2.6	PW informed the group that the National Forum is a quarterly meeting of the regional chairs and staff, and he is currently Chair.	
2.7	Key discussions at the last meeting were around the new Institute and links to ILAM. GreenSpace announced set up of institute with a view to creating stronger partnerships across the sector, and meetings have been held with various potential partner organisations. The development of the institute will form the third arm of the organisation (Institute, Charity, Trading) and will focus on CPD.	
2.8	ILAM will be created as ISPAL (Institute of Sports, Parks & Leisure) which will be government funded at £300k/year for 2 years via Sport England. CABE Space are funded by DCLG but DCMS oversee the programme, and the government are anxious that there is just one body. The new organisation will focus on sport facilities, development and open space management. ILAM house is now for sale. ILAM and GreenSpace are likely to work in partnership, with GreenSpace delivering the professional parks services, as GreenSpace has the skills to deliver where ILAM has not managed to in the past.	
2.9	PW requested comments from the group. RT stated that Torbay are no longer ILAM corporate members, AC has not yet decided. The group went onto briefly discuss skills and the new GreenSpace Passport for CPD. AA highlighted that all of his staff are over 45 with 3 trainee jobs, highlighting that finding the right training is currently difficult. PW requested that the group feed comments back directly to GreenSpace at comment@green-space.org.uk	ALL
2.10	BH queried Natural England's (NE) links to the new Institute. NW explained that NE will be drawn from the existing Countryside Agency, Rural Development Service and natural England, and this will be the new government agency a not a professional body like GreenSpace.	
2.11	PW outlined that the National Forum is also developing an Action Plan for delivery of the regional programme.	

	<p>3. Countryside Agency funding for the GreenSpace South West Development Manager post</p> <p>3.1 PW informed the group that discussions have been held with Tim Quinton (CA), who works for NW. A job description has been drafted and sent to the Steering Group for comment. A draft business plan outlining structures and systems has also been prepared. ALL to request a copy from SM.</p> <p>3.2 NW informed the group that NE has reached a stage and are finalising the agreement with DEFRA, stating that budgets are not as easy to establish as they used to be and the budget for this year has a question mark over it. The project is on the shelf and will be ready to run when the budgets allocated.</p> <p>3.3 PW outlined the Development Manager post, stating that this level had been agreed with the Steering Group. A Director is employed in London, and this maybe what the group hopes to aspire to in the future. This post has been benchmarked to other regional posts, with a slight increase in salary because it's a more demanding job as they will engage in more strategic work. Further discussions with the Steering Group are required to agree the Business Plans' Action Plan and milestones.</p> <p>4. Funding</p> <p>4.1 PW explained that the Steering Group (RT, KH, NJ, PW & SM) had met to consider the budget towards the Development Manager post.</p> <p>4.2 There will be a 3 year commitment between GreenSpace South West and Natural England. Which will require around £40K / year which will raise £120K over the three years. Each party will be equal and will have to find £60K.</p> <p>4.3 Currently there is £5225, being held in the bank account from the CABE Space grant and membership from Bristol City Council from 2005.</p> <p>4.4 Membership subscriptions need to be clear, and links to the GreenSpace national organisations membership need to be developed. It will be important to identify the willingness to join GreenSpace South West as a fee paying member, and therefore create further benefits of membership to encourage regional membership.</p>	<p>ALL</p>
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4.5	<p>PW outlined the proposal that the Steering Group are making to the membership, stating that 3 bands of membership have been identified in addition to membership of the national organisation. Option one is cheaper but won't gain much security in funding, option two is more expensive but creates a financially viable forum. See chart below.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="347 449 1240 638"> <thead> <tr> <th>Population size</th> <th>Number of LA's</th> <th>Target</th> <th>Option 1 (£)</th> <th>Option 2 (£)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Over 150</td> <td>6</td> <td>6</td> <td>1000</td> <td>1000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Over 100</td> <td>14</td> <td>10</td> <td>500</td> <td>750</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Under 100</td> <td>25</td> <td>10</td> <td>250</td> <td>500</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Population size	Number of LA's	Target	Option 1 (£)	Option 2 (£)	Over 150	6	6	1000	1000	Over 100	14	10	500	750	Under 100	25	10	250	500	
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4.6	<p>PW requested that members of the group consider if they're able to afford this rate, and if they would be able to buy in. PW requested comments from the group as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AC prefers option two at £500 per year. • PF considered the pricing to be accurate and adequate, Exeter is supportive and believes in investing for the future for the wider benefit. • PW sees it as being cosponsors of a project. • CD will agree with the majority around the table. <p>The group agreed option two should form the pricing structures.</p>																					
4.7	<p>KH highlighted that small LA's may struggle to participate, and that the decision may need to be reviewed in the future.</p>																					
4.8	<p>PW raised the issue of risk. The employee will be with GreenSpace, as part of the NE commitment they will only have an annual contract to start with. If the group is more confident at the point of appointments, the 3 year contract maybe reviewed. There will be a probation period. GreenSpace lost money last year, and it's a concern for the future so the group will need to ensure the finance is available.</p>																					
4.9	<p>NW highlighted delivery and performance being key to the success of the role, stating it will be difficult to achieve a long term vision without it being taken on.</p>																					
4.10	<p>PW highlighted that year one is more expensive with start up costs, and that travel costs will also feature highly.</p>																					

4.11	The group agreed that those who do not contribute financially their services via the forum maybe restricted.	
4.12	The group queried the timing, and NW stated that the NE commitment may not start until April 2007.	
4.13	MR requested one bill including both memberships to the forum and GreenSpace.	
4.14	AA asked SM to invoice for £500.	SM
4.15	SM to send letters to all those on the network requesting financial commitment.	SM
4.16	LC requested the Steering Group to consider rates for the private sector and corporate rates.	
	5. Learning Themes Matrix	
5.1	PW introduced the matrix, stating that learning would drive the forums agenda. The matrix is a mapping exercise to identify priority themes that are needed, and in addition to identify offers of help to inform the themes. It was agreed that we would prioritise these themes and then set up learning networks.	
5.2	The group discussed starting the process now or wait until a staff member can take it forward. The group agreed to update the learning matrix before deciding whether or not to take it forward. SM to email a reminder requesting updates to the matrix.	SM
5.3	The group discussed section 106 agreements and the group agreed to record their experiences. SM to compile.	ALL/SM
	6. Local Area Agreements (LAA's)	
6.1	The group discussed their experiences with LAA's, Taunton adopted an LAA in April 2006 and Bristol will in April 2007 who are currently getting green space issues into the stretch target. KH highlighted that there has been a lack of engagement in Taunton, as it's being driven by the County and Policy Unit which has meant missed opportunities for the parks service. The group briefly discussed how two layers of local government often make projects difficult.	

6.2	RT highlighted that on the periphery crime, youth and disorder and health are key topics, linked to ‘Safer, Stronger Communities’ and parks feature in this section alongside sport in terms of the lack of parks available.	
6.3	NJ stated there’s a push in Plymouth for the LSP and Corporate Performance Plan that includes an increase in parks and open spaces. Currently delivering strategy focussed on play. They have set up themed groups and put forward funding bids for groups. E.g. Stronger, safer community fund of £50K linking parks to crime and health.	
6.4	AA stated that his Director at North Somerset has taken forward and secured additional funding for parks linked to crime.	
6.5	PF stated that Exeter are not involved, but have a Parks & Open Space Strategy in place which will be referred to as the framework. CD found it’s the same across Devon. MP agreed that there’s nothing in East Devon, AC agreed the same for Mid Devon.	
6.6	MR stated that there’s a newly appointed LAA officer in Bournemouth BC, currently they’re bidding to increase the number of visitors to parks, but difficulties in measuring visitor numbers are preventing this bid from going ahead.	
6.7	BH said that he’s not sure what’s happening in Wiltshire and that it’s often difficult to find the right person.	
6.8	PW mentioned that Bristol as a unitary authority will be involved in LAA’s and have been asked to create targets, which link to BV199 and aim to increase the quality of parks and achieve GFA status. This will be developed around the poorest parks in the most deprived areas, to get them to GFA standard. The stretch targets over 3 years will enable the service to get money to achieve their targets. It’s a concern that this will cost too much for the stretch target to meet.	
6.9	LC reported that Cornwall County Council are in negotiations with government as rewards are getting harder to find, and money thought available for LAAs is no longer there. LC highlighted that its worth getting involved in locally determined targets so that instead of BVPI’s organisations can come up with their own PI’s that will be recognised by government. PW mentioned that SNCI targets will be used to increase conservation status.	

<p>6.10</p> <p>6.11</p> <p>6.12</p>	<p>LC highlighted that there are more opportunities for crime rather than health. PW mentioned that Bristol parks now performance manage with the police, as parks are now on their database. This enables them to demonstrate that there's even more crime in parks than originally thought. AA mentioned that North Somerset now have more accurate crime statistics and this has improved working relations with the police, and positive effects from ASBOs and dispersal audits. AA recommended colleagues get involved with ASBO coordinators groups in their area as there is money available.</p> <p>BCC collect data on time of day, groups, year and who is effected by crime. AA stated that a training day was held for police and parks staff, which enabled a better understanding and exchange of good practice.</p> <p>ALL to email information on LAA's to SM.</p> <p>7. Any Other Business</p> <p>KH queried if any members of the group had experience with registering Village Greens, and thanked those who'd responded to her query to the network. ALL to email SM with any further information, SM to collate the responses.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p>
Date of the next Meeting		
	<p><i>12.00 pm on Wednesday 10th October 2006 at the Livestock Centre, Exeter</i></p> <p><i>12.00 pm on Wednesday 12th December 2006 at the Livestock Centre, Exeter</i></p>	