

## **AGENDA ITEM 4 - ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE TO THE SAVE THE ANIMALS AND BIRDS AT VICTORIA PARK PETITION**

CARRIED.

F.24 Ag.13

AB. 3

"We the undersigned call on Portsmouth City Council to oppose the plan to demolish the animal and bird enclosures in Victoria Park.

Generations of children have enjoyed the birds and the animals and the enclosures should not be destroyed by the Conservatives on the City Council."

We have seen a spate of petitions being created recently for the attention of the City Council, which we have had no sight of. So to be presented with a petition today originating from the Portsmouth Liberal Democrats and its activists provides a small level of reassurance.

For the official record of this meeting, this city council and its Executive has no plans or proposals, none what so ever, and never has had any plans to remove birds or animals from Victoria Park. I will state that again for the record. We have never had any plans to remove any birds or animals from Victoria Park. Disappointingly the one thing this petition has created is confusion and apprehension needlessly amongst the public in Portsmouth which is deeply regrettable.

As a consequence of the submission of this petition, we took the time to check back through council minutes, including those passed by the previous Liberal Democrat administration and we can see no agreed plan or proposal to remove birds or animals from Victoria Park. We have also taken the liberty of checking with the Parks Manager and there is simply no truth in this.

The Lead petitioner would do well to note that at both of the relevant PRED decision meetings in the last 5 months, we stated categorically, for the minutes and as a record of fact that the animals and the birds would NOT BE removed from the park.

We are delighted to confirm that in the true essence of public engagement something this Conservative administration is absolutely committed to, we have recently concluded a full public consultation on the future of Victoria park. One of those options included moving the aviary and animals to one side of the park, offering animals a quiet shelter in the evenings. The Park is increasingly being used for more events and with some 2700 students moving into living accommodation in the area surrounding the Park, the best living conditions for the animals and birds in our care is paramount. This is a top priority.

So in conclusion, we are committed to making Victoria Park a space that can be enjoyed by all and to ensuring that the birds and animals remain in the park in the best location to offer them peace as the parks use grows.

Proposed by (Name) Donna Jones

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Seconded by (Name) LUKE STUBBS

Signed \_\_\_\_\_