



HM Government of Gibraltar

Ministry of the Environment,
Sustainability, Climate Change,
Heritage, Education and Culture

PRESS RELEASE

No: 835/2020

Date: 23rd November 2020

GSD's rushed comments of MidTown Park are out of touch

The GSD, and Elliott Phillips in particular do not seem to be up to date or aware of much these days. Their rushed comments on the closing stages of the development of the new park at Midtown is a clear example.

They also seem to be particularly worried about lawns. Two weeks ago they were saying we should not have a new green area along Queensway. Now they are complaining that a lawn has been removed at Queensway. The inconsistencies in the GSD's position make it difficult to reconcile any of their positions.

As has been explained before and Mr Phillips seems to want to ignore for his own transparent purposes, the lawn that was due to be planted at the site was not available last year. Had one not been laid last year, the site would have been unsightly and, more importantly, the source of dust adversely affecting air quality in the area – something the GSD would then no doubt have been complaining about. As it was intended to provide a grass cover over some of the landscaped area in the Red Sands Road area, this grass, which is less hardy than the one that has proved so successful in Commonwealth Park, was laid there instead whilst the works and other landscaping in the area of Red Sands was finalised. It is now being moved to its final destination as the more robust grass, better adapted to heavy footfall, is now available and will be in Gibraltar in the coming weeks. This demonstrates the Government's good handling of the resources available, using the same grass twice. This is a detail that is clearly inconvenient to Mr Phillip's plan for constant negativity and constant complaining.

It is in a way fortuitous that this should have happened, as it has allowed the planting of the new trees to happen without damaging the grass. The trees were unable to travel from France due to the spring lockdown, and cannot be planted in high summer, but they have all arrived now and are in the process of being planted. Again, these details seem to be inconvenient to Mr Phillip's constant negativity and his constant complaining.

Minister for the Environment John Cortes commented, "I refuse to take gardening lessons from Elliott Phillips! Had we left the area without grass for a year he would have complained about the dust blowing everywhere! And to now suggest 'shoddy workmanship' is ridiculous and another



affront from the GSD to the working people who have done such a great job at MidTown Park. Has he not seen the skill with which these trees are going in? I remember similar comments some years ago about Commonwealth Park that the GSD didn't stop hitting out at. Now the GSD pretend that they love the environment – but they were against Commonwealth Park just like they are against anything and everything that we do. And so I will reply to his latest nonsensical rant with two words and two words only: *Commonwealth Park!*”

ENDS