

**Minutes of the Meeting of the EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS CONSERVATORS
held on 17 July 2017**

PRESENT -

Councillor Liz Frost (Chairman); Simon Durrant (Epsom Downs Racecourse) (Vice-Chairman); Councillor Rekha Bansil, Andrew Cooper (Epsom Downs Racecourse), Councillor Lucie Dallen, Simon Dow (Horserace Betting Levy Board), Councillor Jan Mason and Councillor Clive Woodbridge.

In Attendance:

Absent: Councillor Robert Foote and Nigel Whybrow (Epsom Downs Racecourse)

Officers present: Kathryn Beldon (Chief Executive), Brian Thompson (Interim Head of Financial Services), Richard Appiah-Ampofo (Accountant), Bob Harding (Head Downskeeper), Samantha Whitehead (Streetcare Manager) and Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Officer)

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

It was resolved that Councillor Liz Frost be appointed Chairman of the Conservators to hold office until the first meeting of the Conservators held after the Annual Meeting of the Borough Council in May 2018.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

It was resolved that Mr Simon Durrant be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Conservators to hold office until the first meeting of the Conservators held after the Annual Meeting of the Borough Council in May 2018.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators held on 19 April 2017 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

4 ITEMS OF INTEREST DISCUSSED BY THE TRAINING GROUNDS MANAGEMENT BOARD (TGMB)

The Conservators received a report providing an update on items considered by the Epsom and Walton Downs Training Grounds Management Board (TGMB). The report provided updates on the following matters: Heras fencing alongside the Derby gypsy and travellers site; the Queens Stand equestrian crossing;

Epsom Downs improvement plan and horse numbers training on Epsom and Walton Downs.

The following additional matter was noted:

- a) **Hatched area, foot of Walton Downs – use for hack riding.** The Chairman informed the Conservators that the TGMB had agreed to open the hatched area at the foot of Walton Downs for use by hack riders after 12 noon, and that it was now available for use. The use and condition of the area would be monitored by the TGMB to inform its decisions on whether it could continue to permit hack riding there.

5 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

The Conservators received a report providing an update on issues raised at previous meetings. The report provided updates on the following matters: the hack sand track at the foot of Walton Downs; public consultation on the proposal for parking on land in front of the Derby Arms Public House; and works to the water main near the Downskeepers' Hut.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Public consultation on proposal for parking on land in front of the Derby Arms Public House.** Following a question from a member of the Conservators, the Chairman informed the meeting that officers were assessing the background issues relating to this matter. There had been a delay in completing that work, but once it had been completed the consultation would be initiated.
- b) **Works to water main near the Downskeepers' Hut.** Following a question from a member of the Conservators, it was noted that the works to this piping only affected the Downskeepers' Hut. It did not affect supplies to the Racecourse or other facilities.

6 FINAL ACCOUNTS 2016/17

The Conservators received a report providing the final accounts for the financial year 2016/17.

The Conservators were informed that the accounts had been successfully closed within the required deadline, and had been reviewed and approved by the Council's internal auditor.

Expenditure exceeded income by £3,443, leading to a reduction in the working balance of the same amount. Net expenditure for the year had been £1,713 above the original budget. A working balance of £52,816 had been carried forward to the 2017/18 financial year, in addition to a repairs and renewals fund of £35,860.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Interim Head of Financial Services' opinion.** The interim Head of Financial Services informed the Conservators that the position of their account was very positive, given the level of the working balance and repairs and renewals fund.
- b) **Vandalism of public conveniences.** The Conservators were informed that expenditure relating to repairs of the Tattenham Corner public conveniences had been incurred due to vandalism shortly prior to the Derby Festival.
- c) **General office expenses.** It was noted that officers would monitor expenditure for general office expenses on a quarterly basis.

Following consideration of the report, the Conservators:

- (1) Received the final accounts for 2016/17, subject to external audit.
- (2) Accepted the Statement of Accounts and the Annual Governance Statement as set out in sections 1 and 2 of Annexe 3 to the report.
- (3) Confirmed that the arrangements for internal audit as set out in the report are effective for auditing purposes.
- (4) Agreed that the Chairman and Clerk be authorised to sign the Statement of Annual Return on behalf of the Conservators.

7 REPORT OF THE HEAD DOWNSKEEPER

The Conservators received a report of the Head Downskeeper updating them upon recent issues and activities on the Downs.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Staffing.** The Conservators noted that temporary cover for the member of staff on long-term absence was now in place.
- b) **Derby festival.** The Conservators were informed that the set-up and post-event clear up for this year's Derby festival had gone well.
- c) **Networking for Downskeepers and racehorse trainers.** It was noted that meetings between downskeepers and racehorse trainers would be arranged to provide the opportunity to further strengthen their working relationships, and discuss any issues which had arisen.

8 PROPOSAL FOR SIGN TO BE LOCATED AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE 1ST TEE ON EPSOM GOLF COURSE

The Conservators received a report presenting a request from Epsom Golf Club for permission to install a new sign at the entrance to the 1st Tee on the Golf Course.

Following consideration, the Conservators:

- (1) Granted permission to the proposal from Epsom Golf Club for a new sign to be installed at the entrance to the 1st Tee on the Golf Course, in accordance with Byelaw 2 (i) (a).

9 PROPOSAL FOR EXTENSIONS TO PATHWAYS ON THE GOLF COURSE

The Conservators received a report requesting permission for Epsom Golf Club to carry out pathway extensions on the golf course.

The following matter was considered:

- a) **Surface material for pathways.** The Streetcare Manager informed the Conservators that the surface material proposed for the pathways had been identified by the Golf Club in consultation with the Borough Council's planning department. Alternative surface materials had been trialled, but were unfortunately not suitable for the locations identified.

Following consideration, the Conservators:

- (1) Agreed in principle to the proposal from the Golf Club to join up two existing pathways across the 7th fairway, subject to obtaining the necessary planning permission.
- (2) Agreed in principle to the proposal to extend the pathway from 8th hole to the 13th tee, subject to obtaining the necessary planning permission.

10 OUTSTANDING REFERENCES

The Conservators received and noted the position of their outstanding references.

The following matter was noted:

Date of Downs Tour. It was noted that officers would identify a suitable date for this year's Downs Tour and inform members of the Conservators following the meeting.

11 HACK SAND TRACK, FOOT OF WALTON DOWNS - FUTURE OF HORSE RACE BETTING LEVY BOARD

The Conservators noted that an earlier item on the agenda had reported that no response to the letters sent to the Horse Race Betting Levy Board (with regard to the condition of the hack sand track at the foot of Walton Downs) had been received.

Andrew Cooper informed the meeting that it was likely that the Horse Race Betting Levy Board would cease to exist within the next 2 years, and that its role and responsibilities would be held by a different authority. The Conservators noted that this would potentially have implications for the management of the

sand track, and representation at meetings of the Conservators by the member appointed by the Horse Race Betting Levy Board.

The meeting began at 6.00 pm and ended at 6.26 pm

COUNCILLOR LIZ FROST (CHAIRMAN)