

Minutes of the Meeting of the EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 16 March 2026

PRESENT -

Councillor Steven McCormick (Chair); Simon Durrant (Epsom Downs Racecourse), Councillor Bernice Froud, Sarah Rayfield (British Horse Society) and Nigel Whybrow (Training Grounds Management Board)

In Attendance: Richard Balsdon (College Ward Residents Association), Jane Clarke (WERs), Nick Lock (Epsom Civic Society), James Vincenti (EDMAC), Roger Marples (EDMAC), Brian Burke (EDMAC)

Absent: Alex Stewart (Epsom Downs Riders Protection Society), Jim Allen (The Jockey Club (TJC)), Caroline Baldock (Epsom Equestrian Conservation Team) and Nick Harrison (Tattenham & Preston Residents' Association)

Officers present: Jackie King (Chief Executive) and Phoebe Batchelor (Democratic Services Officer)

5 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee confirmed as a true record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 13 October 2025 and authorised the Chair to sign them, subject to the following amendment italicised below;

“Minute 4,

- f) **Hack Riders.** The representative from EDMAC raised a persistent issue with hack riders riding behind EDMAC Members, on the road parallel to the racecourse. *The representative raised that hack riders are also crossing EDMAC’s take off landing strip.* The representative highlighted that on the noticeboard content map, hack riders should not be there. The Chair agreed to look at the map with the representative and if hack riders are not supposed to be there, this will be communicated to the relevant contacts and stakeholders.”

6 ACTION TRACKER

The Committee received a report presenting an update on the Committee Action Tracker.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Conditions of Hack Canter Ride.** The Chair explained that the required work had been completed. This was confirmed by the Member from the Training Grounds Management Board. The Member explained that the Epsom Downs Riders Protection Society Member had been shown the work and was happy with the results.
- b) **Noticeboards on the Downs.** The Chair informed the Committee that the content has been finalised and signed off, and the prints are on order. He asked members and invited representatives to assist in putting up the printed content onto the noticeboards, once it arrives. The Chair thanked the Committee for their patience on this item.
- c) **Toilets on the Downs.** The Chair raised that there is a possibility of putting in a Community Infrastructure Levy application for funding for the project.
- d) **Events on the Downs.** The Chair stated that communication for events on the downs is greatly improved. He thanked officers for their efforts on this area.
- e) **Dog Walking.** The Chair informed the Committee that they are currently in the process of organising a pilot training and awareness scheme for dog walking on the downs, for Langley Vale residents, with a look to offer the scheme to a wider audience following the pilot scheme. Councillor Froud declared that she is a licensed dog walker and home boarded. The Chair noted the comment. The Chair raised that the relevant stakeholders will be consulted whilst the scheme is being planned.
- f) **Local Government Reorganisation.** The Chief Executive informed the Committee that the Council's legal team and operational services have been asked to create a briefing note on the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators and Consultative Committee. This note will then be submitted to the relevant workstream. This will fall under land, property, and legal. The Chair raised that currently the Conservators have six Epsom and Ewell Borough Councillors as part of their membership. He highlighted that with the new East Surrey Council; there is no certainty or guarantee that the councillors sitting on the Conservators going forwards will be from the local area.
- g) **Car Park Management Plan.** The Chair agreed to provide an update following the meeting. He explained that there are various car parks across the downs which are under the control of the Jockey Club and the Downskeepers, and the item on the action tracker is about managing their usage and time.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

(1) Note the status and update on actions listed in the Committee Action Tracker.

7 ISSUES RAISED BY THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Committee considered matters raised by Members.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Wood inspections.** Councillor Froud raised the issue of the current state of the Warren wood and the Langley Vale woodland. She queried if there is a management plan which includes regular inspection for the woodland areas. She raised that even if areas are trimmed, the cut offs are just thrown to one side and left to rot. The Chair noted the comments and agreed to provide a response and update following the meeting. He explained that the overall responsibility for the wood maintenance falls to the Borough Council and the Council's Tree Officer. The Chair agreed to look into scheduling works for later on in the year, as it would be difficult presently due to birds nesting.
- b) **Hedge cutting and trees.** The Member from the British Horse Society asked if people are using public rights of way or is it a situation of overall permissive access. The Chair confirmed that people are using public rights of way and bridleways. The Member raised that due to a change in the legislation for hedge and tree cutting, any adverse impact on public highways, including public rights of way, the works can go ahead. The Chair agreed to discuss the matter with the Council's Tree Officer.
- c) **Potholes.** The Chair reminded the Committee that it is important to report potholes so they can be logged and fixed by Surrey County Council. The Chair explained the Fix My Street website should be used to report potholes. Councillor Froud expressed frustration and concern about the number of potholes and the severity of them and the damage they can and have caused, namely on Grandstand Road. She also raised the difficulty with reporting potholes which are located on busy and fast roads. The Chair agreed to visit Grandstand Road and help report the potholes. The representative from College Ward Residents' Association raised the issue of the potholes and surface of the carparks on Grandstand Road and asked the Chair to also look at that when possible. The Chair agreed to do so and informed the Committee that additional budget was approved by the Conservators in January for Car Park Maintenance.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Consider the matters raised by members of the Committee as set out in this report.**

8 ISSUES RAISED FOR CONSIDERATION BY INVITED REPRESENTATIVES

The Committee discussed issues raised by invited representatives.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Litter.** The Chair informed the Committee that additional bins are being purchased and will be put on the Downs.
- b) **Signs.** The Chair confirmed that once he is aware of when the new signage and noticeboard content is being delivered, he will contact Consultative Committee Members and Invited Representatives to assist with installation.
- c) **Derby impact.** The representative from College Ward Residents' Association raised the recent comments in the press from the Jockey Club about reviving the Derby Festival. The representative highlighted the importance of taking into account the impact on the local community, especially when talking about increasing the turnout. The Member from the Jockey Club expressed hope that changes to the Derby would have a positive impact and supports the additional efforts to increase turnout, improve customer experience and really invest in and champion the festival. The Member highlighted that from a residents' perspective, the Derby Festival is a challenging time, but it is also a huge and historic event to be proud of. The Member made clear that it is not the Jockey Club's ambition to make the festival longer and spread out over the week, but it is keen to increase the attendance and improve the experience of the two scheduled days. He explained that local residents have nothing to be fearful or worried about.
- d) **Behaviour of attendees.** The representative from College Ward Residents' Association raised concerns regarding the behaviour of some of the attendees of the Derby. He explained that Cheltenham placed Portaloo's throughout the town and that could help avoid some instances of anti-social behaviour. The Member from the Jockey Club explained that some facilities are placed by the Tattenham Corner Pub and the Tattenham strait. He acknowledged the concerns and comments raised. The Chair raised that communication is important and Committee Members and invited reps can help get the word out and help manage and raise relevant concerns. The representative from EDMAC raised that the Jockey Club could use a new style app for giving more in detail information regarding the weather forecast and specific times. He also suggested that the Jockey Club contact the special constabulary for policing the event. The Member from the Jockey Club confirmed that Surrey and Sussex Police do have links with the special constabulary and ensure they have the right teams in the right areas.
- e) **Maintenance of Bunds.** The representative from College Ward Residents' Association raised concerns about the state of the bunds and the issue with fly-tipping and dumping in the car park nearby. He asked

what will be done with the soil that has been put in place and if there is a management plan for installing and maintaining the bunds. The Chair explained that the bunds have been put in place as a deterrent to dissuade people from mounting the curb and driving onto that area. He informed the Committee that the soil used has been taken from elsewhere on the Downs and there is a habitat management plan which the Council's Countryside Officer is actively engaged with. He acknowledged that there is work to do in tidying them up and explained that affected residents can be involved in what to do with the bunds.

- f) **Spoil Heaps.** The representative from Epsom Civic Society raised the ongoing issue of spoil heaps on the Downs. He explained that most of the materials are not natural to the Downs. He stated that if the materials are going to be reused, this should occur within a reasonable timeframe and not be left for years, and if it needs to be kept for years, then it should be kept in a tidy way. He expressed disappointment that when one of the spoil heaps was removed, a new one appeared immediately after. He asked for a list of what projects go with which piles and roughly when they will be completed. The Chair raised that first and foremost, the Downs is a training and working environment and there is mixed-use with the public. He explained that Nigel and the team are working hard to move additional mounds that have appeared and confirmed that the piles can be categorised as to where they have come from and what they are there for and the information will be shared. The Member from TGMB confirmed that the pile at Ebbisham Lane will be gone in the next 7-10 days, and a lot of the pile of all-weather material in the grass triangle is in the process of being moved over the next few weeks. He explained that the material in the top car park is all in use and there has always been material for training use stored there and this will continue. He accepted that it is untidy and explained that some of this is due to car park materials being stored and kept there too. He agreed to go round and identify the mounds and their uses. The representative from Epsom Civic Society suggested that when a project is commissioned and material is required or planned to be reused later, it should be within the project budget to ensure the mound is taken away rather than dumped. He did not accept the comment that it is acceptable to have the mounds left because the Downs is a working environment. The Chair informed the Committee that he has listened to comments and continues to raise the issue to TGMB and the Conservators and is making proactive steps to address the issue.
- g) **Litter Bins.** The representative from Epsom Civic Society welcomed the prospect of additional litter bins on the Downs. He suggested that bins are placed on the bottom road by the lower gallop track where the paths cross for those walking into the Langley Vale wood. The Chair noted the comment.
- h) **Runway damage.** The representative from EDMAC raised the ongoing issue of damage to the runway and highlighted that it is caused by both horses and people. He explained that horses should not be walking

across the runway and organised runs had been planned which crossed the runway section. The Chair informed the Committee that the issue can be shared on the Epsom Riders Facebook group to ensure that people are made aware there shouldn't be horses crossing the runway. He agreed to circulate a message into the group. He also agreed to raise the issue to any race events who are planning routes on the Downs.

- i) **Family Day.** The representative from EDMAC raised that the next open day has been scheduled for Monday the 4th of May. He informed the Committee that the 2025 event was a success, and this event will build off of that success.
- j) **Precepts.** The representative from College Ward Residents' Association asked for the percentages of the Conservators precept. The Chair confirmed that the precept is paid 60% by the Council, 30% by the Jockey Club (Epsom Racecourse), and 10% by TGMB.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Consider the matters raised by invited representatives as set out in this report.**

The meeting began at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.00 pm

COUNCILLOR STEVEN MCCORMICK (CHAIR)