

**Minutes of the Meeting of the EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS CONSERVATORS
held on 18 June 2018**

PRESENT -

Councillor Liz Frost (Chairman); Simon Durrant (Epsom Downs Racecourse) (Vice-Chairman); Councillor Lucie Dallen (Items 07 - 11 only), Simon Dow (Horserace Betting Levy Board), Councillor Jan Mason, Nigel Whybrow (Epsom Downs Racecourse) and Councillor Clive Woodbridge.

In Attendance: Conor Morrow (Lower Mole Countryside Management Service)

Absent: Councillor Rekha Bansil, Andrew Cooper (Epsom Downs Racecourse) and Councillor Robert Foote

Officers present: Kathryn Beldon (Clerk to the Conservators), Ian Dyer (Head of Operational Services), Amardip Healy (Chief Legal Officer), Sam Beak (Downs Manager), Brendan Bradley (Chief Accountant) (Items 01 - 07 only) 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 2019.

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 2019.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators held on 16 April 2018 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

4 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 following matter was considered:

- a) **Maintenance of hack sand track, foot of Walton Downs.** The Horserace Betting Levy Board (HBLB) had confirmed that it was in discussions with the Jockey Club and Epsom Downs Riders Association with regard to the issues and obligations surrounding the hack sand track.

The Conservators were informed that it was hoped that the matter would be resolved prior to the transfer of functions from the HBLB to the Gambling Commission, later this year.

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

The Conservators received a verbal report on items of interest discussed by the TGMB. The TGMB had last met on 11 June 2018. The Conservators were informed of the following items:

- a) **Number of horses in training and winners.** The number of racehorses in training on the Downs was similar to 2017 numbers. The number of winners had slightly increased, but the prize money had reduced due to an Epsom Trainer winning a high value overseas race in 2017.
- b) **Button for equestrian crossing near the Queens Stand.** The TGMB was pleased that a new larger button for this crossing had been installed by Surrey County Council.
- c) **Racing Welfare properties.** The Racing Welfare properties were being brought up to standard and would be habitable soon.
- d) **Hatched area, foot of Walton Downs.** This area had been opened again for use by hack riders.

6 ORDER OF BUSINESS AT THIS MEETING

The Chairman informed the Committee that the business of the meeting would be reordered, with Item 9 of the agenda (Final Accounts 2017/18) considered prior to Item 6 (Report of the Head Downskeeper).

7 FINAL ACCOUNTS 2017/18

The Conservators received a report providing the final accounts for the financial year 2017/18 and the financial position as at 31 March 2018.

Expenditure exceeded income by £3,230, leading to a reduction in the working balance of the same amount. A working balance of £49,585 had been carried forward to the 2018/19 financial year, in addition to a repairs and renewals fund of £31,057.

The Conservators were informed that the electricity charge for the Tattenham Corner conveniences (listed on page 56 of the agenda) had been queried with the service provider. It had been confirmed to be an overbilling, and the excess amount would be credited to the Conservators account.

Following consideration, the Conservators:

- (1) Agreed that the final accounts for 2017/18 be received, subject to external audit.
- (2) Approved the Annual Governance Statement as set out in section 1 of Annex 3 to the report.
- (3) Considered and approved the Accounting Statements as set out in section 2 of Annex 3 to the report.
- (4) Confirmed that the arrangements for the internal audit as set out in the report were effective for auditing purposes.
- (5) Agreed that the Chairman and Clerk be authorised to sign the Annual Governance Statement and the Accounting Statements on behalf of the Conservators.

8 REPORT OF THE HEAD DOWNSKEEPER

The Conservators received a report of the Head Downskeeper which provided updates on the Derby period and informed the Conservators that an article detailing 'a morning in the life of a Downskeeper', the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984 and control of dogs on the Downs would be included in the next issue of Borough Insight magazine.

It was noted that there had been a number of unauthorised traveller encampments within the Borough in the period directly prior to the Derby Festival. The Head of Operational Services informed the meeting that Council officers had visited each of these camps to inform them that the authorised Derby gypsy and traveller site had opened, once it had done so.

Following consideration, the Conservators noted the report of the Head Downskeeper.

9 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE DERBY RACE MEETING

The Vice-Chairman provided the Conservators with a verbal report on this year's Derby Festival. The following matters were detailed:

- a) **Pre-event planning and support from partner bodies.** The preparations for the Derby festival had gone very well and the Vice-Chairman informed the Conservators that Epsom Downs Racecourse wished to express its thanks to all partner bodies and organisations, and in particular Sussex and Surrey Police, for their work and support over the whole Derby period.
- b) **Success of Derby festival.** Overall admission numbers had been up on those achieved in 2017, and both Ladies Day and Derby Day had been very successful.

- c) **Use of the Hill on Derby Day.** The existing sponsorship arrangements for the Hill had ended and the Racecourse would consider how best to approach this in future. The Racecourse was pleased at the success and support shown for its Family Enclosure on the Hill and would continue to build upon this in 2019. Aerial photography of this year's Festival had shown that numbers on the Hill were good.
- d) **Post Derby Cleanup.** This year's post Derby cleanup had been very successful, with no significant issues having been reported.

10 PARKING ON LAND IN FRONT OF DERBY ARMS

The Conservators received a report seeking consideration of Epsom Downs Racecourse's request for permission for car parking on car parks known as Car Park 2 and 6 on the Downs, outside their previously permitted usage.

Annex 2 to the report provided a map which identified Car Parks 2 and 6. The map showed that Car Park 2 had two sections, one of which was to the south of Ashley Road, the other was to the north of Ashley Road. The Conservators were informed that the Racecourse no longer wished to seek permission to use the section of Car Park 2 to the north of Ashley Road as an element of this application. The Conservators were therefore requested to only consider the use of Car Park 2 to the south of Ashley Road and Car Park 6 for the purposes of this application.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Consultation responses.** The Conservators noted the responses received to the public consultation on the proposal, including submissions made via the internet based consultation form and separate correspondence from the Epsom Civic Society and British Horse Society. The Officers' comments on the issues raised in the responses was also noted.
- b) **Concerns of Racehorse trainers.** Simon Dow informed the meeting that the use of the section of Car Park 2 to the South of Ashley Road could lead to potential difficulties and risk to racehorses travelling through the area to/from stables. The Conservators considered that if approval were to be granted to the Racecourse's request, condition (ii) detailed on page 20 of the agenda could be amended to include a reference to racehorses in training.
- c) **Circumstances for use of Car Parks 2 and 6.** The Vice-Chairman informed the Conservators that the Racecourse would only make use of Car Parks 2 and 6 if its existing car park facility had reached capacity.
- d) **Agreement of a management plan for use of Car Parks 2 and 6.** The Conservators considered that if approval were to be granted to the Racecourse's request, a management plan would be required as detailed in condition (iii) on page 20 of the agenda. This would be produced by the Racecourse and agreed with Officers of the Council.

- e) **Controls on unauthorised usage.** The Conservators were informed that a metal pole restricted access to Car Park 6 on dates on which it was not being used for authorised parking.
- f) **Limit on level of usage.** The Conservators considered that if approval were to be granted to the Racecourse's request it should be limited to a maximum of 40 uses per year, with each use of each Car Park counting toward the total. This level was in line with the informal usage which the Racecourse had made of the areas over the past year.
- g) **Length of approval period and review of decision.** The Conservators considered that if approval were to be granted to the Racecourse's request it should be for a period of one year, and reviewed prior to further approval being considered.

Following consideration, the Conservators resolved:

- (1) To approve Epsom Downs Racecourse's application to use the areas identified on the Plan attached at Annex 2 to the report known as Car Park 2 (south of Ashley Road) and 6 for further car parking use subject to the following conditions:
 - (i) limit the use of Car Park 2 (south of Ashley Road) and 6 jointly to no more than 40 days a year (which is exclusive of existing permitted user rights);
 - (ii) to identify and make available suitable paths to enable use for racehorses in training/hack riding/pedestrians to continue when Car Park 2 (south of Ashley Road) and 6 are in use for an event falling within (i) above;
 - (iii) the Racecourse produce an agreed management plan for the management of the car parks, which is then implemented, to ensure compliance with proposed conditions and restrictions, with the rights of inspection of such plan given to officers of the Council.
 - (iv) the approval granted is for one year.

11 HACK RIDING MAP

The Conservators received a report presenting a new Hack Riding information map to assist in educating horse riders on where to ride on Epsom and Walton Downs.

The following matter was considered:

- a) **Map key for hatched area at the foot of Walton Downs for hack riding.** The Conservators identified that the key to the map did not explain how hack riders would know whether they were permitted to use the hatched area at the foot of Walton Downs or not, only that it was at the discretion of the Training Grounds Management Board. It was requested

that the map be amended to inform users that a sign located at the hatched area would display whether it was open for use or not.

Following consideration, the Conservators:

- (1) Approved the new Hack Riding Map subject to an amendment being made to inform riders that a sign at the hatched area at the foot of Walton Downs would display whether it could be used.
- (2) Granted permission to publish the map on the website and for the map to be used to produce a hack riding leaflet, in consultation with the Downskeepers, Gallops staff and Hack Riding representatives.

In granting this approval the Conservators expressed their thanks to officers for their work to produce the map, and noted that it would also be distributed to local hack riding stables.

12 FORWARD PLAN FOR CONSERVATORS' ITEMS

The Conservators received a report setting out a list of anticipated reports to be considered over the next year.

Following consideration, the Conservators:

- (1) Noted the forward plan for items.

The meeting began at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.11 pm

COUNCILLOR LIZ FROST (CHAIRMAN)