

**Minutes of the Meeting of the EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS CONSERVATORS  
held on 8 October 2018**

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**PRESENT -**

Councillor Liz Frost (Chairman); Andrew Cooper (Epsom Downs Racecourse), Councillor Lucie Dallen, Councillor Robert Foote, Councillor Jan Mason, Nigel Whybrow (Epsom Downs Racecourse) and Councillor Clive Woodbridge.

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

Absent: Simon Durrant (Epsom Downs Racecourse), Councillor Rekha Bansil and Simon Dow (Horserace Betting Levy Board)

Officers present: Kathryn Beldon (Clerk to the Conservators), Amardip Healy (Chief Legal Officer), Sam Beak (Downs Manager), Samantha Whitehead (Streetcare Manager) and Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Officer)

**13 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators held on 18 June 2018 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**14 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Conservators received a report providing an update on issues raised at previous meetings. The following matter was considered:

- a) **Maintenance of the hack sand track, foot of Walton Downs.** The Conservators received the update provided within the agenda, and were informed that officers had still not received a response to the correspondence sent to the Horserace Betting Levy Board in September 2018.

Following consideration, the Conservators noted the current situation on the issue.

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

The Conservators received an update on items considered by the Epsom and Walton Downs Training Grounds Management Board (TGMB). The following matters were included within the update: Refurbishment of Racing Welfare

properties, Number of horses in training and winners, Closure of 'hatched area' to hack riders, Langley Vale Woods car park, Vision for Epsom.

Following consideration, the Conservators noted the update on items considered at recent meetings of the TGMB.

## 16 REPORT OF THE HEAD DOWNSKEEPER

The Conservators received the report of the Head Downskeeper. The following matters were included within the report: Conservation work on Juniper Hill, Race meetings and Events, Winter Work Programme, Hack Riding Map. In addition to these matters, the following items were considered:

- a) **Chafer grub damage to grass on the Racecourse.** Following a question from a member of the Conservators, Andrew Cooper informed the meeting that damage to the grass surface of the Racecourse track caused by chafer grubs had led to the race meeting of 13 September 2018 being abandoned. The race meeting of 30 September 2018 had been held, but with all races being a mile or less, due to damage to the course between its 1.5 and 1.25 mile marks. The matter was being managed by the Racecourse.
- b) **Vandalism of Racecourse railings and starting stalls.** Andrew Cooper informed the Conservators that there had been a number of incidents of vandalism to the Racecourse railings and starting stalls over recent months. These had been reported to the Police.

Following consideration, the Conservators agreed to note the report of the Head Downskeeper.

## 17 PROPOSED EVENTS ON EPSOM DOWNS

The Conservators received a report providing details of event requests for consideration.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Number of participants at proposed Alzheimer's Society Memory Walk, 8 September 2019.** The Conservators expressed concern at the large number of participants proposed for this event. The Conservators considered that if approval were granted it should be capped at a maximum of 2,000 participants, which was the same number as permitted for the event held in 2018. The Conservators noted that there had been difficulties at the event in 2018, due to a lack of route marshals at some crossing points. This issue had been reported to the event organiser, who had responded that it would be addressed for the next event, if approved.
- b) **Proposed Serbia's Forgotten Paws charity dog walk, 31 October.** The Conservators considered that if approval were granted, that all dogs participating in this event should be kept on a lead whilst doing so. It was

also considered that the organiser should be required to request all participants clean up after their dog whilst on the Downs.

Following consideration, the Conservators:

- (1) Agreed to grant approval to hold the following events on the Downs:
  - Serbia's Forgotten Paws Charity Dog Walk (Wednesday 31 Oct 2018), subject to all dogs participating in the event being held on a lead whilst doing so, and the event organiser requesting all participants to clean-up after their dogs.
  - Surrey Mens Cross Country League (Saturday 10 November 2018)
  - Epsom & Ewell Harriers Boxing Day running event (Wednesday 26 Dec 2018)
  - The 80th Pioneer Run for Veteran Motorcycles (Sunday 24 March 2019)
  - First Stride Events Ltd (Sundays 30 Mar, 10 Nov 2019)
  - Rotary Club of Banstead Sponsored Walk (Sunday 5 May 2019)
  - Round the Borough Bike (Sunday 12 May 2019)
  - Cancer Research UK: Race For Life (Sunday 23 June 2019)
  - Round the Borough Hike (Saturday 7 Sept 2019)
  - Alzheimer's Society (Sunday 8 Sept 2019), subject to a cap of 2000 participants and improved marshalling of the course to address the issues experienced in 2018.
- (2) Noted the Calendar of Events for 2018/19.
- (3) Noted the fees and charges to be applied to each event subject to the event being approved.

## 18 REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES

The Conservators received a report providing a review of the fees and charges for events on the Downs, Metal Detecting Licenses and memorial items. It was noted that no changes to Metal Detecting Licenses were proposed.

Following consideration, the Conservators:

- (1) Approved the Fees and Charges for Events on the Downs at Annex 1 to the report.
- (2) Approved the Fees and Charges for Memorial Items on the Downs at Annex 2 to the report.

**19 RURAL DEVELOPMENT GROWTH PROGRAMME FOR ENGLAND APPLICATION FOR FUNDING**

The Conservators received a report seeking a budget of £6,300 in 2018/19 to support the development and submission of a full application for funding from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) programme.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Development of application – current position.** The Conservators were informed that an expression of interest had been submitted for EAFRD funding to support the development of visitor signage and appropriate visitor infrastructure on the Downs. This had been successful, and officers had been invited to submit a full application.

Officers would attend an EAFRD workshop at the end of October, and intended to submit a full application in early January 2019. Visual design for the project had not yet commenced, but would be a key element of the full application, as would confirmation of the project timeline and source of non-EAFRD funding contributions, amongst other elements. The Conservators were informed that the production of a full application was a significant piece of work, and that support from a consultant would be required to meet the submission deadline. The report proposed that £6,300 be utilised from the working balance in order to fund this work.

- b) **Consideration of Race Horse Trainers' views.** It was noted that the Horserace Betting Levy Board nominee (Mr Simon Dow) who represents Racehorse Trainers had been consulted with regard to the proposed scheme, and had expressed support for it. The further development of the project would be undertaken in consultation with Mr Dow.

Following consideration, the Conservators:

- (1) Noted the success of the Expression of Interest in the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).
- (2) Agreed to support the development of a full EAFRD application bid, based on the project identified within the Expression of Interest, subject to ongoing development and feasibility work.
- (3) Agreed to allocate a budget of £6,300 to develop the full application, to be funded from the working balance.
- (4) Agreed to seek support from the Jockey Club for the required private sector funding contribution of circa £7,500.
- (5) Agreed that the project revenue elements totalling a further £20,000, be funded from the working balance.

- (6) Agreed that an annual contribution to the working balance of £6,580 should be built into the draft 2019/20 budget, to replenish the working balance over a period of four years.

## 20 MID-YEAR BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

The Conservators received a report advising them of income and expenditure in 2018/19 as at 31 August 2018, and seeking guidance on the preparation of the budget and precept for 2019/20. An updated Risk Register for the Downs for 2018/19 was also presented.

Following consideration, the Conservators:

- (1) Agreed to note the mid-year income and expenditure position as at 31 August 2018;
- (2) Agreed to note the guidance detailed in paragraph 3.5 of the report with regard to the increase in precept contributions for 2019-20;
- (3) Agreed to note the 2018/19 Risk Register for the Downs.

## 21 EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

The Conservators received a report presenting the Minutes of the meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee held on 17 September 2018.

Following consideration, the Conservators

- (1) Noted the Minutes of the meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee held on 17 September 2018.

## 22 DATE OF MEETINGS IN 2019

The Conservators received a report presenting dates for meetings in 2019.

Following consideration, the Conservators:

- (1) Agreed to hold their first two meetings in 2019 on the following dates:
  - Monday 21 January 2019 at 18.00 hours
  - Monday 15 April 2019 at 18.00 hours

**Note: Following the meeting it was agreed in consultation with the Chairman to reschedule the meeting on 21 January 2019 to 28 January 2019, due to an unforeseen clash on the previously agreed date.**

**23 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 6.50 pm*

COUNCILLOR LIZ FROST (CHAIRMAN)