

Minutes of the Meeting of the EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 14 December 2022

PRESENT -

Councillor Liz Frost (Chair); Simon Durrant (Epsom Downs Racecourse), Councillor Bernice Froud, Sarah Rayfield (British Horse Society), Alex Stewart (Epsom Downs Riders Protection Society) and Nigel Whybrow (Training Grounds Management Board).

In Attendance: Caroline Baldock (Epsom Equestrian Conservation Team), Richard Balsdon (College Ward Residents' Association), Nick Lock (Epsom Civic Society) and James Vincenti (Epsom Downs Model Aircraft Club)

Absent: Andrew Cooper (Epsom Downs Racecourse), Bob Eberhard (Epsom and Ewell Cycle Action Group), Nick Harrison (Tattenhams Residents' Association), Steven McCormick (Woodcote Residents' Association), Conor Morrow (Lower Mole Countryside Management Service), Stuart Walker (Epsom Golf Club) and Samantha Whitehead

Officers present: Jackie King (Interim Chief Executive), Ian Dyer (Head of Operational Services), Mark Shephard (Head of Property and Regeneration), John Samuel (Interim Property and Regeneration Manager) and Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Manager)

1 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee held on 12 January 2022 were agreed as a true record and the Chairman was authorised to sign them.

2 EAFRD UPDATE

The Committee received an update report on European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) infrastructure installation which provides improvements to information and signage on Epsom and Walton Downs.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **EAFRD funding.** The Committee noted that the Conservators had been awarded over £132,000 in grant funding from the European Agricultural

Fund for Rural Development for improvements to signs and information on the Downs.

- b) **Works.** The Interim Property Development and Regeneration Manager informed the Committee that the following works had been completed or were in progress:
- 150 way marking posts.
 - 25 finger posts with over 80 direction fingers.
 - 40 A0 size information boards.
 - 8 A1 size lectern information boards.
 - 15 oak litter bins.
 - 4 tables and 8 benches around the Tea Hut area.
 - 5 interpretive benches located across the Downs.
 - 2 sets of electronic posts at the mile crossing and Rubbing House crossing, which are able to separately record pedestrians, cyclists and horses passing through.
 - 48 warning signs and information inserts were anticipated to be installed by the end of January 2023.
 - In addition, the Jockey Club was funding an educational rubbing trail consisting of 12 rubbing plates depicting historic events on the Racecourse and Downs.
- c) **Repairs to damage / vandalism.** The Committee noted that damage to the signs was repaired by the Council's operational services staff.
- d) **Bins.** The Committee noted that the full quota of bins had been received and installed on the Downs. Officers would consider whether any further bins were required.

Following consideration, the Committee unanimously resolved:

(1) To note the progress made on improvements to signs on the Downs.

3 MATTERS RAISED BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Committee considered matters raised by Members.

The following matters raised by the Epsom Downs Riders' Protection Association Member were considered:

- a) **Replacement of Hack Sand Track with Hack grass canter.** The Training Grounds Management Board Member informed the Committee that the new grass canter opened in October 2022 and had proved very popular with hack riders.
- The Committee received a comment from an invited representative that the start of the track had become very wet and rough following the recent exceptional levels of rain, which had led to a fall from a horse. The Training Grounds Management Board Member informed the Committee that the area was rolled on a weekly basis to maintain its condition, and that he had not received any complaints regarding it. The Epsom Downs Riders' Protection Association Member informed the Committee that hack riders were delighted with the new canter.
- b) **Condition of hack canter at top of Six Mile.** It was noted that the Council's Streetcare Manager and the Epsom Downs Riders' Protection Association Member of the Committee would meet on 20 December to discuss this matter.
- c) **Marking of hack ride across The Hill and hack post renewal on the Downs.** The Committee was informed that the replacement of hack post signs was underway.
- d) **Water logging of track at top of Rifle Butts Alley.** The Committee was informed that scrub clearance work in this area had been undertaken.
- e) **Update on Downkeepers' winter work programme.** It was noted that the Council's Streetcare Manager and the Epsom Downs Riders' Protection Association Member of the Committee would meet on 20 December to discuss this matter.
- f) **Traffic light phasing for pedestrians and racehorses crossing by bus shelter.** The Committee was informed by the Head of Operational Services that no issues had been reported with regard to the traffic light phasing in the past 3 months.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved:

- (1) That it had considered the matters raised by members of the Committee as set out in the report.**

4 MATTERS RAISED FOR CONSIDERATION BY INVITED REPRESENTATIVES

The Committee considered issues raised by representatives invited to attend the meeting.

The following issues raised by the Epsom Downs Model Aircraft Club (EDMAC) Representative were considered:

- a) **Signage.** The EDMAC Representative asked whether it would be possible for the Club to be referenced on relevant signs on the Downs. The Head of Operational Services informed the Committee that some signs would feature a map of the Downs including the model aircraft area.
- b) **Epsom Downs Model Aircraft Club (EDMAC) mobility impaired parking.** The EDMAC Representative asked whether it would be possible for alternative parking arrangements for to be provided for Club Members with mobility issues. Some members were having difficulties with the present arrangements. The Chair informed the Committee that this matter would be considered at a future meeting of the Conservators.

Following consideration, the Committee resolved:

- (1) That it had considered the matters raised by invited representatives as set out in this report.**

5 ITEMS FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE CONSERVATORS

The Committee did not identify any items from the meeting which would require verbal representation to the Conservators.

The meeting began at 6.00 pm and ended at 6.30 pm

COUNCILLOR LIZ FROST (CHAIR)