

Minutes of the Meeting of the EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS CONSERVATORS held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 27 January 2025

PRESENT -

Councillor Steven McCormick (the Council) (Chair); Jim Allen (Jockey Club Racecourses (the Company)) (Vice-Chair); Councillor Christine Cleveland (the Council), Andrew Cooper (Jockey Club Racecourses (the Company)), Simon Dow (Horserace Betting Levy Board (the Levy Board)), Simon Durrant (Jockey Club Racecourses (the Company)), Councillor Liz Frost (the Council), Councillor Kim Spickett (the Council) and Councillor Clive Woodbridge (the Council)

Absent: Councillor Bernice Froud (the Council)

Officers present: Jackie King (Chief Executive), Peter Sebastian (Director of Corporate Services (S151)), Samantha Whitehead (Interim Assistant Head of Service - Streetcare) and Phoebe Batchelor (Democratic Services Officer)

15 TRIBUTE TO DOWNSKEEPER, RICHARD CULLENS

The Chair paid tribute to Downskeeper, Richard Cullens, who sadly passed away in January of this year.

The Interim Assistant Head of Service (Streetcare) expressed thanks for the work Richard did in both a voluntary and agency capacity to ensure the Downs ran safely and smoothly and shared that it has been a big loss to the team. These comments were echoed by the Chair.

The Conservators observed a minute's silence in memory of Richard.

16 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Conservators held on **4 November 2024** were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

17 BUDGET 2025/26

The Conservators received a report seeking approval for the 2025/26 budget and the recommended precepts on the constituent bodies.

Following consideration, the Conservators unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Note the latest income and expenditure position for 2024/25.**
- (2) Approve the 2025/26 budget and the requested precepts, as set out in section 4 and Appendix 1 to this report.**

18 DERBY 2025 UPDATE

The Conservators received an update on the arrangements for the Derby 2025.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Time Change.** The Vice Chair informed Conservators that due to a request from ITV, the Derby Race will be held at 3.30pm instead of 4.30pm. A Member of the Conservators asked why it is to be held earlier this year. The Vice Chair explained that the Men's England Football team are due to play away in Andorra at 5pm on the Derby day and ITV intend to go live with the Football build-up at 4.30pm. The Vice Chair explained that the race could be held at 4.30pm but it would not be broadcast on ITV1. The Vice Chair informed the Conservators that whilst the Jockey Club would prefer the race to be later, for international betting reasons, it would be better to be broadcast on ITV1. The Vice Chair made clear that the Jockey Club are contracted with ITV to show the race and will accept the requested time change.
- b) **Derby Update.** The Chair informed Conservators that a further Derby Update would be provided via email during April.
- c) **Langley Vale Residents.** The Chair informed Conservators that there has been significant engagement with Langley Vale Residents to communicate the arrangements for the Derby festival.

Following consideration, the Conservators unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Note the update on the 2025 Derby arrangements from the Epsom Downs Racecourse.**

19 EPSOM DOWNS RACING SEASON 2025

The Conservators received a report informing them of the dates for race meetings in 2025 and presenting a request from Jockey Club Racecourses for consent for race meetings and extensions to the periods permitted for fencing, as required by the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984 and Epsom and Walton Downs Byelaws.

Following consideration, the Conservators unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Note the dates of the 2025 racing season for Epsom Downs detailed in paragraph 2.1 of this report, and grant their consent to the following meetings in accordance with section 14 of the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984:**
 - **Wednesday 2 July (Evening)**
 - **Thursday 10 July (Evening)**
 - **Thursday 17 July (Evening)**
 - **Thursday 31 July (Evening)**
 - **Sunday 28 September**
- (2) **Note that Jockey Club Racecourses has applied to Surrey County Council for the temporary suspension of Footpath 50 and Footpath 51 as detailed in section 4 of this report.**
- (3) **Agree an application from Jockey Club Racecourses for consent under the Byelaw 2 (i) (a) to extend the fencing period for the Upper Tattenham Enclosure and Lonsdale Enclosure for 4 days to cover the period 19 May – 22 May 2025.**
- (4) **Agree an application from Jockey Club Racecourses for consent under the Byelaw 2 (i) (a) to extend the fencing period for the Lonsdale Enclosure to enable fencing to remain in place between the dates 18 June – 24 June 2025.**

20 RISK REGISTER

The Conservators received a report presenting the risk register for the Epsom and Walton Downs.

The following matters were considered:

- a) **Toilets on the Downs.** The Chair proposed that Risk EWDC7, regarding the reprovision of toilets facilities on the Downs, was removed from the risk register, as it is currently captured on the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee Action Tracker. The Conservators unanimously agreed that the risk should be retired.

Following consideration, the Conservators unanimously resolved to:

- (1) **Review and note the strategic risk register located at Appendix 1.**

21 EVENTS ON THE DOWNS 2025

The Conservators received a report informing them of the current confirmed events on the 2025 Event Calendar for the Downs.

The report sought approval in principle to hold the 80th Anniversary of VE Day Beacon Lighting event at the View Point Car Park, Epsom and Walton Downs on 8 May 2025.

- a) **Downs Harrier Run.** A Member of the Conservators raised concerns regarding the with the Downs Harrier Run taking place between 11am and 2pm on a Saturday and voiced how this may conflict with training. The Interim Assistant Head of Service Streetcare noted the concern, and informed Conservators that the long-standing event would not cause issues with training. The Interim Assistant Head of Service Streetcare confirmed they would contact the event organisers.

Following consideration, the Conservators unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Note the forthcoming Events Calendar for 2025.**
- (2) Grant approval to hold the 80th VE Day Beacon Lighting event at the View Point Car Park, Epsom and Walton Downs on 8 May 2025 in accordance with the Conservators' legal and policy obligations set out in section 5 of this report.**

22 REVIEW OF USE OF THE OWNERS AND TRAINERS AND DERBY ARMS CAR PARK BY THE RACECOURSE

The Conservators received a report updating on the use of the Owners and Trainers and Derby Arms Car Parks by the Racecourse during 2024 and formally requesting permission for ad-hoc use in 2025.

- a) **Trainers.** A Member of the Conservators asked if Trainers had been asked directly if they have any problems. The Interim Assistant Head of Service Streetcare informed Conservators that Trainers had not been directly asked, but if there were any issues, they would have been made clear by now and addressed. The Chair noted that issues would have been raised at the Training Grounds Management Board meetings. A Member of the Conservators stated that there has been a reduction in the amount of use of the Trainers and Owners Car Park and confirmed that any anxieties and issues with its use have been regularly raised and acknowledged.

Following consideration, the Conservators unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Note the level of use by the Jockey Club of Car Parks 3 and 8 during 2024**

- (2) To approve an application by the Jockey Club to use these car parks during 2025 for ad-hoc events.**

23 SCHEME FOR BBQS AT THE RACECOURSE REVIEW

The Conservators received a report reviewing the use of barbecues during 2024 race meetings and detailing an application from Epsom Downs Racecourse for the use of barbecues at events throughout 2025.

Following consideration, the Conservators unanimously resolved to:

- (1) Note the success of the Barbecue Scheme during 2024 race meetings.**
- (2) To grant Epsom Downs Racecourse permission to use barbeques at race meetings throughout 2025, namely Ladies Day, The Derby and the August Bank Holiday race meetings.**

24 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

A Member of the Conservators asked what the future of the Conservators would be if Epsom and Ewell Borough Council ceases to exist, due to EEBC being specifically named in the Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act 1984.

The Clerk to the Conservators responded to inform Conservators that the Council's legal team are looking into the situation, and it would likely be the case, that the arrangement will be transferred to whatever new authority is created.

The meeting began at 6.00 pm and ended at 6.26 pm

COUNCILLOR STEVEN MCCORMICK (CHAIR)

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