

Minutes of the Meeting of the EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE held at the Council Chamber, Epsom Town Hall on 13 October 2025

PRESENT -

Councillor Steven McCormick (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: Jim Allen (Epsom Downs Racecourse), Richard Balsdon (College Ward Residents Association), Jane Clarke (Woodcote Residents Association), Nick Lock (Epsom Civic Society), Michael Hall (Epsom Downs Model Aircraft Club), James Vincenti (Epsom Downs Model Aircraft Club)

Absent: Caroline Baldock (Epsom Equestrian Conservation Team) and Nick Harrison (Tattenham & Preston Residents' Association)

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

1 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Epsom and Walton Downs Consultative Committee held on 24 March 2025 were agreed as a true record and the Chair was authorised to sign them.

2 ACTION TRACKER

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

The following matters were discussed:

- a) **Conditions of the Hack Canter.** The Chair explained that the required work had been completed, and the item could now be closed on the action tracker. This was confirmed by the Member from the Training Grounds Management Board and the Epsom Downs Riders Protection Society.
- b) **Noticeboards.** The Chair explained that the draft noticeboard content had been circulated to all attendees for their comments following the meeting. The representative from the Epsom Civic Society asked when the content will be displayed on the boards. The Chair stated that once everyone is in

agreement, the next step will be to send the content to the printers and then get it on the noticeboards. The Chair expressed thanks to Councillor Spickett and the Assistant Head of Service – Streetcare for their help in getting to this stage. The representative from the Epsom Civic Society asked for confirmation that there will be content put on the lectern noticeboards, as well as the large noticeboards. The Chair confirmed that there is content prepared to go on the lectern noticeboards too and agreed to share the content with the Committee via email.

- c) **Drones.** A Member asked if there is a specific mention against flying drones on the Downs in the byelaws. The Assistant Head of Service – Streetcare stated they had taken legal advice on this topic and the byelaws do cover drones.
- d) **Spoil Heaps.** The Chair reminded the Committee that the Downs is primarily to be used for the purpose of racehorse training. The Chair informed the Committee that many spoil heaps are materials earmarked for works across the Downs. The representative from the Epsom Civic Society stated that it is not fair to say they are being repurposed and earmarked for works when many spoil heaps have sat unmoved for years. The Chair agreed to a meeting with the Jockey Club and the Assistant Head of Service – Streetcare, to identify the spoil heaps and explain or justify why they are there and what they will be used for and when, or to identify what needs to be removed from the Downs.
- e) **Toilets on the Downs.** The Chair explained that this item will remain on the action tracker but at present there is no budget to progress it.
- f) **Fibre Sand Gallop.** The Chair explained that the required work had been completed, and the item could now be closed on the action tracker. This was confirmed by the Member from the Training Grounds Management Board and the Epsom Downs Riders Protection Society.
- g) **Resurfacing of Hack Track.** The Chair explained that the required work had been completed, and the item could now be closed on the action tracker. This was confirmed by the Member from the Training Grounds Management Board and the Epsom Downs Riders Protection Society.
- h) **Events on the Downs.** The Chair informed the Committee that this item is still a work in progress and the relevant actions will be progressed to get it into a position to have the relevant information shared with interested stakeholders and visible on the Epsom and Ewell Borough Council Website. The representative from EDMAC raised that they had issues attempting to advertise their EDMAC Family Day event on the 'What's on' feature on the EEBC website. The Chair reminded the Committee of the importance of keeping the racing community abreast with any events planned on the downs.
- i) **Racehorses using Hack Track.** The Chair confirmed this item has been addressed and can be closed.

- j) **Additional Lighting.** The Chair informed the Committee that additional lighting by the Durdans, at the bottom of Chalk Lane, has been installed. The Chair explained that he had hoped to add more lighting to Chalk Lane but due to power issues and budget constraints, it was not possible to do so.
- k) **School Run Traffic.** The Chair explained that the gate at the bottom of Chalk Lane does have a Traffic Regulation Order on it, but there is an issue of who would lock and unlock the gate. The Chair informed the Committee that they are following it up with Surrey Highways to look at what options there are with this particular issue. The Member from the British Horse Society encouraged the Chair to check if the TRO reference motorised vehicles or just vehicles.
- l) **Dog Walking on the Downs.** The Chair acknowledged that there are still issues on the downs with regards to dog walkers and out of control dogs. He mentioned that there are still plans to hold an awareness day for dog walkers on the downs.
- m) **Car Park Management.** The Chair mentioned that there would be an update on this item at the January 2026 meeting of the Conservators.
- n) **Local Government Reorganisation.** The Chair informed the Committee that the decision on what is happening to Surrey as a result of Local Government Reorganisation has been delayed until the end of October. The Chair explained that it has been added to the action tracker as the reorganisation will affect the 1984 Act which governs the Downs. The Chief Executive clarified that any contracts or agreements that name Epsom and Ewell Borough Council, will be automatically transferred and inherited by the new Unitary Authority. She explained that there will be conversations taking place to understand how the Conservators will operate under the new Unitary Authority. The Chair mentioned that he has raised this item with TGMB and encouraged them to allocate budget for any legal work that would need to be done on the 1984 Act with the upcoming changes.

Following discussion, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

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

3 ISSUES RAISED FOR CONSIDERATION BY INVITED REPRESENTATIVES

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

The following matters were discussed:

- a) **Signs on the Downs.** The Chair explained that the amount of signage is a difficult balancing act but agreed to address that balance if there is need in certain areas for additional signage for cyclists.
- b) **E-Bikes.** The representative from EDMAC raised that they are seeing a lot more e-bikes up on the downs and a lot more speeding and dangerous behaviour. The Chair explained that there is limited resource to deal with this issue. The Member from the British Horse Society suggested looking into a Public Safe Protection Order for electric bikes in the area as it would come under an antisocial issue. The Chair informed the Committee that there is a PSPO in place across the whole of Epsom, that was renewed last year at Crime and Disorder Committee, which is in place to help deal with antisocial behaviour. The Chair also mentioned that he had chaired a meeting on antisocial behaviour, with the Chair of Crime and Disorder Committee, the local MP, and several other stakeholders. He explained that non-assisted e-bikes are a problem in certain parts of the borough and encouraged people to report issues to the police as they will use that information to better target their patrols. The Assistant Head of Service – Streetcare mentioned that the police find specifics helpful and encouraged people to make note of what the riders are wearing or the make and model of the bike, if possible.
- c) **Litter bins.** The Assistant Head of Service – Streetcare explained that there has not been a budget for bins on the downs and standard practice has been repurposing bins that have been removed from other parts of the borough and putting them on the downs. The Assistant Head of Service – Streetcare informed the Committee that it could be something the Conservators would like to budget for in the future. The Chair agreed with the comments.
- d) **Events on the Downs.** The Chair reiterated that the work will be done, and the Hack Riders Facebook group and relevant stakeholders will be notified. The Chair encouraged the Committee to identify the relevant contact points and build a list for future information sharing regarding events on the downs.
- e) **Surfaces in the Car Park.** The representative from College Ward Residents' Association asked if the works on the surfaces in the car parks would be completed soon. The Assistant Head of Service – Streetcare explained that the work has been added to the Winter Workplan 25/26 and should be completed over the coming months.
- f) **Car Parking.** The representative from College Ward Residents' Association raised concerns about the parking on the triangle by the Derby Arms and asked for clarification regarding the cars that are parked there. The Chair thanked the representative for raising the issue to the Committees' attention and raised that it will be looked at and considered as part of the Car Park Management review and fed back to the Consultative Committee. The Assistant Head of Service – Streetcare

explained that there are two issues which need to be addressed, some day-to-day parking that is not to do with the Jockey Club, and the Car Park Management review in relation to events held by the Jockey Club.

g) **Fly tipping.** The representatives from the Epsom Civic Society raised that there are still issues of fly tipping on the downs. The Chair stated they would look into the fly tipping and follow up with the Jockey Club and TGMB. The Chair explained that CCTV signs and mobile CCTV have been put up on the downs, which can be deployed as problems arise or they are allowed from an operational point of view.

Following discussion, the Committee unanimously resolved to:

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

4 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The following items were raised:

a) **Quad Bikes.** The Member from the Council informed the Committee of teenagers driving a quad bike up and down six-mile hill on Friday the 10th of October. The Member highlighted how none of the children had helmets on. The Member reported the incident to the Chair of Crime and Disorder and was attempting to report to the police. The Assistant Head of Service – Streetcare asked what time the incident occurred. The Member confirmed it was between 4 and 5pm.

b) **German Shepherds.** The Member highlighted that there was a German Shepherd fest held on the downs, with as many as 80 German Shepherds being walked on and off the lead around six-mile hill. The Member queried if it was an organised event that was approved. The Member suggested there is a risk assessment done as the dogs are large and unpredictable. The Assistant Head of Service – Streetcare highlighted the difficulties with trying to find out the event organisers for the aforementioned event but invited the Member to share any relevant information so the event could be looked into.

c) **Illegal Betting.** The Member raised that they had observed illegal betting taking place in nearby field following the September 28 Season Finale Raceday. The Assistant Head of Service – Streetcare explained that they tried to deal with this issue 5 years ago with the police and didn't get anywhere with it. The Assistant Head of Service – Streetcare confirmed that they are aware of the issue. The Chair agreed to raise the issue with the Borough Commander at the next anti-social behaviour meeting and with the Community Safety Partnership to see if there is anything that can be done resource wise. The Member from the British Horse Society suggested that HMRC or Customs could be contacted to see if they would take any action to combat the issue.

- d) **Fallen Trees.** The Member raised that there are a few large fallen trees in the Warren woods and the Top woods that need dealing with. The Assistant Head of Service – Streetcare agreed to add them to the Winter Workplan 25/26.
- e) **EDMAC Noticeboard.** The representative from EDMAC raised that the noticeboard next to the EDMAC noticeboard is about to fall over. The Assistant Head of Service – Streetcare confirmed that this will be rectified and dealt with as soon as possible.
- 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 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.
- g) **Overgrown vegetation.** The representative from EDMAC raised that there is overgrown vegetation by the gate at the top car park near the mile post, which is causing issues for access with wheelchairs, buggies, or trollies. The Assistant Head of Service – Streetcare confirmed that it will be cut back.
- h) **Positive relationship.** The Member from the Epsom Downs Riders Protection Society expressed their thanks to the Downskeeper who had accompanied him and Nigel Whybrow on the meeting around the downs. The Member commended the positive relationships between hack riders, the Racecourse, and the Downskeepers. The Chair echoed the Members comments and highlighted the multiple positive actions and changes that have occurred on the downs.
- i) **Benches.** The representative from EDMAC expressed their happiness at the new benches that have been installed on the downs. The Assistant Head of Service – Streetcare noted the comment.
- j) **Coffee Vendor.** The Chair informed the Committee of another coffee van that will shortly begin vending on the downs.
- k) **Running Club Event.** The Chair informed the Consultative Committee about an event application that has been received to reinstate an event in 2026 organised by the Oddballs Running Club.

The meeting began at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.00 pm

COUNCILLOR STEVEN MCCORMICK (CHAIR)