

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
DOWNS COMMITTEE
HELD ON 12TH SEPTEMBER 2011 AT 4.30 P.M.**

- P The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor
Councillor Geoff Gollop
- P Councillor Cook
- P Councillor Davies
- A Councillor Goulandris
- P Councillor Hugill
- P Councillor Morgan
- A Councillor Ron Stone
-
- A Giles Clarke - Master
-
- P Anthony Brown)
- P Francis Greenacre)
- P Tom Hood)
- A David Marsh)
- A Peter Rilett)
- P Alan Tasker)

DWN

50.9/11

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND INTRODUCTIONS

Apologies were received from Councillor Goulandris, Giles Clarke, David Marsh and Peter Rilett.

DWN

51.9/11

MINUTES - DOWNS COMMITTEE - 4TH JULY 2011

39.7/11 Membership - The Committee noted Councillor Hugill's concern about how the Councillor would be appointed to the Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project Steering Group.

43.7/11 – Proposals for Improvements to Downs Play Area – It was important that the Committee should be involved in coming to a decision of whether the play area should be enclosed . The committee were reminded that the policy for enclosure of play areas was for protection from dogs. It was agreed that the minutes

should be changed to 'that consideration be given as to whether enclosure would be appropriate' (**Action: Ruth Kenrick**).

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting of the Downs Committee held on 4th July 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair, subject to the change above.

**DWN
52.9/11**

PUBLIC FORUM

A public forum statement from FODAG was noted.

**DWN
53.9/11**

DOWNS RANGER REPORT

The Committee considered a report of the Downs Ranger (agenda item no. 4) receiving an update on works and developments carried out since the last meeting.

Downs Day

Following the success of the 150 year celebration of the Downs Act, a 'Downs Day' was proposed in a 'music in the park' style format. The event would start reasonably small with room to develop into an annual event with different themes such as wildlife and conservation. There would be a minimum requirement in terms of cost and infrastructure as music would not be amplified. Some costs could be offset by selling catering provisions with future opportunity to expand and become cost neutral.

It was suggested that the event could be held near the sea walls and linked to the Jubilee in the first week of June 2012, with the possibility of a controlled beacon to link with the Dundry Beacon.

It was confirmed that the Race For Life and Run for the Future organisers had been informed of the views of the Committee regarding the use of Saville Road and although plans would not be altered for this weekend, they could be altered for 2012.

Access

Work to Downs trees had taken place with some removed due to damage or disease. A tree from Westbury Road had been felled and left in the bushes for stag beetles to continue to thrive.

Bus Stops

It was confirmed that the installed bus stops had not encroached any further onto Downs land than the original bus stops from the 1970s. It had been established however that the stop at Whitetree Roundabout were less than DDA complaint and it was therefore suggested that the footway be taken pack to 1.2 metres to comply whilst other works took place **(Action: Robert Westlake)**

Parking

A new citywide company commenced their contract on 3rd October 2011 and signage would change over the next few weeks. Officers confirmed that the text would be as clear as possible and the required size and frequency to be enforceable.

Roads

It was confirmed that widening the road along Stoke Road and would be considered in line with the FODAG traffic project. The Downs Ranger would also speak to Alun Owen regarding the proposal (although it could be prohibited by the cost and resources) **(Action: Robert Westlake).**

Viewfinders/Telescopes

The Downs Ranger had ascertained that the telescopes would cost £9,000 and take approximately 2 ½ years to pay for themselves. It had been decided to put them on hold due to the Council cuts.

RESOLVED - (1) that it be agreed in principle for the establishment of an annual Downs Day and further research into the feasibility of such an event taking place in 2012 be endorsed.

(2) That the bus shelter on Whitetree Roundabout be moved back to the required distance to be DDA compliant.

**DWN
54.9/11**

DELEGATED AND UPCOMING EVENTS PROPOSED ON THE DOWNS

The Committee considered a report of the Service Director of Communication and Marketing (agenda item no. 5);

- noting the events and filming that have taken place between committee meetings under delegated powers; and

- noting proposed future events between committee meetings.

The following points were made:

- Filming for Casualty had now finished as the show relocated to Cardiff. It had been a quiet year in events across the city.
- Talks for Race For Life would take place in the run up to 2012 as the event had changed over the last few years and required a new assessment.
- It was not considered feasible to increase the fees for Funderworld to a six figure sum due to falling attendance and that they had ceased the event in other cities. The increase would also be outside the schedule of charges which could be criticised. It was recommended that the fees be brought in line with those of the circus.
- The schedule of charges would be frozen for the coming year to reflect the economic downturn and support new and fledgling events. Commercial and cultural event fees would increase by 5% in line with inflation.
- The uptake by personal trainers for licenses was slow although there appeared to be interest in guidelines for practitioners. Permits should be on person and produced on request.

RESOLVED - (1) that the events and filming that have taken place between committee meetings under delegated powers be noted; and

(2) that the proposed future events between committee meetings be noted.

(3) That Funderworld be quoted fees in line with the circus.

DWN

55.9/11

FINANCE UPDATE

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Services (agenda item no. 6) noting the estimated outturn and potential use of reserves for 2011/12.

There is an estimated underspend of £8,000 however the final position would depend upon the amount required from reserves at year-end.

The £3,000 balance outstanding from Tony Hopkins Entertainment was expected to be cleared by the end of the week and the Lord Mayor/Master would be informed via email. A site licence for future events would only be awarded when the balance was cleared. Officers confirmed that a payment schedule in the new system would mean flags would be raised earlier if payment was not received.

It was confirmed that the general decline of events would not necessarily impact the budget as income from smaller events were not fully budgeted for. The impact of the loss of casualty was not known but on average they paid £350 per day for location shots, although bookings had declined over the last couple of years.

RESOLVED - that the estimated outturn and potential use of reserves for 2011/12 be noted.

**DWN
56.9/11**

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN DOWNS COMMITTEE AND BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

The Committee considered a report (agenda item no. 7) noting and endorsing the Memorandum of Agreement made between the committee and Bristol City Council in its capacity as highways and traffic authority for its administrative area.

The Memorandum of Agreement was an understanding between and Committee and the Council regarding the rights and responsibilities for Downs land and verges. It was to be held on record for those who support and succeed on the Downs Committee, signed and dated as appropriate (**Action: Ruth Kenrick**).

RESOLVED - that the Memorandum of Agreement made between the committee and Bristol City Council in its capacity as highways and traffic authority for its administrative area be endorsed.

**DWN
57.9/11**

UPDATE OF GBBN PROPOSALS - BRIEFING NOTE

The Committee considered a briefing note (agenda item no. 8) setting out an update on GBBN proposals.

RESOLVED - that the briefing note be noted.

**DWN
58.9/11**

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED - that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the following item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act as amended by paragraph 3 of the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

**DWN
59.9/11**

TENDER APPLICATIONS FOR PROVISION OF CIRCUS 2011-2014

The Committee considered an exempt report of the Service Director of Communication and Marketing (agenda item no. 10) regarding tender applications for the provision of circus 2011-2014.

Tony Hopkins had been chosen but was still subject to approval by the Safety Advisory Group.

Officers were thanked for their work preparing the tender. It was confirmed that 15% was redirected to the Council for administration costs.

It was suggested that a pre-payment clause would prevent future debts being incurred however, it was considered that in today's economic climate it would not be feasible. Officers were asked to find out whether payment terms could be considered in light of the payment history and inform the Lord Mayor and master. **(Action: Pete Watts)**

RESOLVED - that Tony Hopkins Entertainments Limited has been awarded a three year (2011-2014) contract to provide an annual circus on the Downs subject to approval by the Safety Advisory Group, be noted.

DWN

60.9/11

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED - that the next meeting of the Downs Committee be held on 21st November 2011 at 4.00 p.m. at the Council House, College Green.

(The meeting ended at 5.50pm)

LORD MAYOR