

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

Downs Committee

7th July 2014

Report of: *Peter watts Festival and Events Officer and Andrew Gordon -*

Title: *Income and Revenue Optimisation at The Downs*

Officer Presenting Report: *Peter Watts – Festival and Events Officer*

Contact Telephone Number: *0117 922 3466*

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee are recommended to approve:

- 1. the relaxing of delegated powers on the understanding that an events sub group will initially inform any decision making regarding major events.*
- 2. suitable areas (or unsuitable areas) to market the Downs for increased event activity.*

Summary

This report explores options to increase revenue from event and associated outdoor activity at Durdham Downs

The significant issues in the report are:

This report has been created in response to recent reports from Mike Allen Finance officer for BCC advising of the need to explore revenue and income optimisation options.

Policy

- 3. N/A*

Consultation

- 4. Internal*

5. External

Not Applicable

Context

Introduction

At the Down Committee meeting held in January and again in April the Finance officer recommended that the committee explore income and revenue optimisation and suggested that the addition of at least one new major commercial event to the Downs could offer a long term increase in annual revenue. Andrew Gordon was tasked with exploring options to increase revenue. This report outlines those findings.

Currently The Downs hosts two major commercial events

- Funderworld – April / May
- A Traditional Circus –Late Sept / Oct

Proposal

The committee are requested to review the Delegated Powers process for major events. This report requests that a relaxing of the current permission process is agreed to encourage new events to The Downs.

The report also suggests introducing an 'event sub – committee' that can fast track and approve new major event applications and expressions of interest. The aim of the relaxing of powers being to secure new major events to the Downs. Charitable events which are now of a significant size will also undergo a review of fees to reflect the footfall and infrastructure on site.

- The event organisers are known to BCC with a history of managed events in other BCC managed sites.
- The event has a history in the South West region (ideally in Bristol) and is seeking to relocate
- The organisers agree to meet with a Downs event sub – group comprised of the Festival and events officer, Estates team, Noise Pollution , Highways and Conservation officer to discuss site specifics and operational concerns when developing the event.
- The event attends a formal Safety Advisory group for events (SAGE) table top meeting to discuss safety planning. Once the advice of the SAGE are met final consent will be granted.

- The organisers present to a 'Sub group for events' who have to agree on the proposals and can set conditions for site use.

The proposed new process will be that the Lord Mayor and Master are provided with a short report from the events sub group meeting with which to make a decision to provide 'agreement in principle'.

It should be stressed that major events do run a significant risk of noise disturbance, traffic congestion and grounds damage. Pre-planning can mitigate against some disruption but larger festivals and touring shows will bring a certain element of disturbance and possibly invite criticism about the decision to approve such activity.

Events Sub Group

It is proposed that the events sub group will ideally compromise of the following:

Estates Management team
 Site Permissions Officer
 Conservation officer
 Natural England representative

The sub group will ascertain if an event is 'appropriate' discussion the following key concerns:

- Reputation of the applicant and history of previous events.
- Size and Nature of the event
- Benefit of the event to the citizens of Bristol.
- Suitability of the event site and potential risk of ground reinstatement requirements.
- Impact of the event on local residents and stakeholders and measures to reduce the impact
- Environmental impact of the event
- Diversity of the city wide outdoor events calendar and frequency of events
- The fee and bond applicable to the event

A report would then be prepared by this group offering recommendations and seeking The Mayor and Master to either support the event or decline the expression of interest.

At these meetings event organisers will be offered the opportunity to discuss their event plans and start an open dialogue about the suitability and appropriateness of the event as well as anticipated site fees and bonds.

It is envisioned that the sub group would only need to meet once or twice a year.

Types of Commercial Events that may presented to Downs Events Sub group:

- Touring Shows
- Festivals
- Music events
- Hybrid running event / festival
- Corporate Hospitality Events
- Marketing and Experiential Activity

It should, be noted that Bristol City Council has been approached predominantly ion the last few years by Music festival organisers and hybrid running / festival events. The events industry has trends and currently the demand is with outdoor music events targeting 18 – 35 year olds. It may not be possible to procure other event types deemed more desirable by the committee due to a lack of commercial buy in.

Charitable Events

In some instances charitable events are of a significant size to be considered major events. In this instance as from April 2015 it is recommended that a Large Charity fee is introduced across all BCC sites for consistency. This fee (TBC) will reflect the increasing popularity of some larger charity events and seek a more realistic site fee for the dry hire of the land.

Smaller charity events will not be subject to this increased fee.

Alternative sites for events

Following the last meeting action to look at alternative sites for larger event activity and other events an option appraisal of locations (see Areas shown within the attachment) has been carried out:

Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
Area 1	The ground is level, it is close to the existing Funder World site, has access to water and could be used before the Circus arrive in October. Funder World have verbally confirmed they could use this site before the circus.	May not be sufficient size for large events but could be if combined with Area 4 by closing Ladies Mile

Area 2	The area was used by the Bristol Water pipeline works and is of low nature conservation value and is close to Funder World existing site. Funder have used part of this area to park on.	The ground is very uneven ground and unlikely to be suitable for Funder world (other than as a parking area) and other events.
Area 3	The area is sufficient size to accommodate Funder World and other events.	The area is currently made up of football pitches, subject to heavy wear and tear and need to be reinstated and allowed to recover. Locating Funder World or another event would delay the recovery period but maybe possible. No water is available but this could be provided at a cost.
Area 4	The ground is level, and relatively close to the Funder World site and would be sufficient size for their event.	There is no water available at this site but it would be possible for this to be arranged, although the cost maybe high. The land is adjacent to the remains of Roman Road but this could be fenced off. This area may not be of sufficient size for large events but could be if combined with Area 4 and by closing Ladies Mile
Area 5	The ground is level and is of sufficient size to accommodate large events. If a music event was held here the sound could be projected into and across the gorge.	There is no water available but this could be provided. The area is currently made up of football pitches subject to heavy wear and tear and need to be reinstated and allowed to recover. Locating Funder World or another event would delay the recovery period but may be possible to achieve reinstatement in time for the football season in September.

Car Parking at Events

Officers are currently exploring a charging model for the use of The Downs as an overspill car park at the recently announced Tour of Britain event in September. If successful this model can be applied to other events that's seek to use The Downs as an overspill car park. (Tour of Britain being a pilot scheme)

Proposal

6. *DC are requested to approve the relaxing of delegated powers on the understanding that an events sub group will initially inform any decision making regarding major events. They are also requested to agree suitable areas (or unsuitable areas) to market the Downs for increased event activity.*

Risk Assessment

7. *Presently the Downs Committee reserves are at low levels. Failing to take advantage of the demand for event activity at the Downs is capping potential revenue.*

Major events increase the risk of noise disturbance, traffic disruption and grounds damage.

Significant increases in site hire fees may lead to The Downs becoming undesirable as organisers seek alternative sites at cheaper rates.

Public Sector Equality Duties

- 8a) Before making a decision, section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following "protected characteristics": age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:
 - i) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
 - ii) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to --
 - remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share

a relevant protected characteristic;

- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);
- encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

- iii) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to –
- tackle prejudice; and
 - promote understanding.

Financial

(a) Revenue

Mike Allen

(b) Capital

Mike Allen

(Financial advice provided by *Mike Allen – finance Officer BCC*)

Land

Not Applicable

Personnel

Not applicable

(Personnel advice provided by *<Insert name and job title>*)

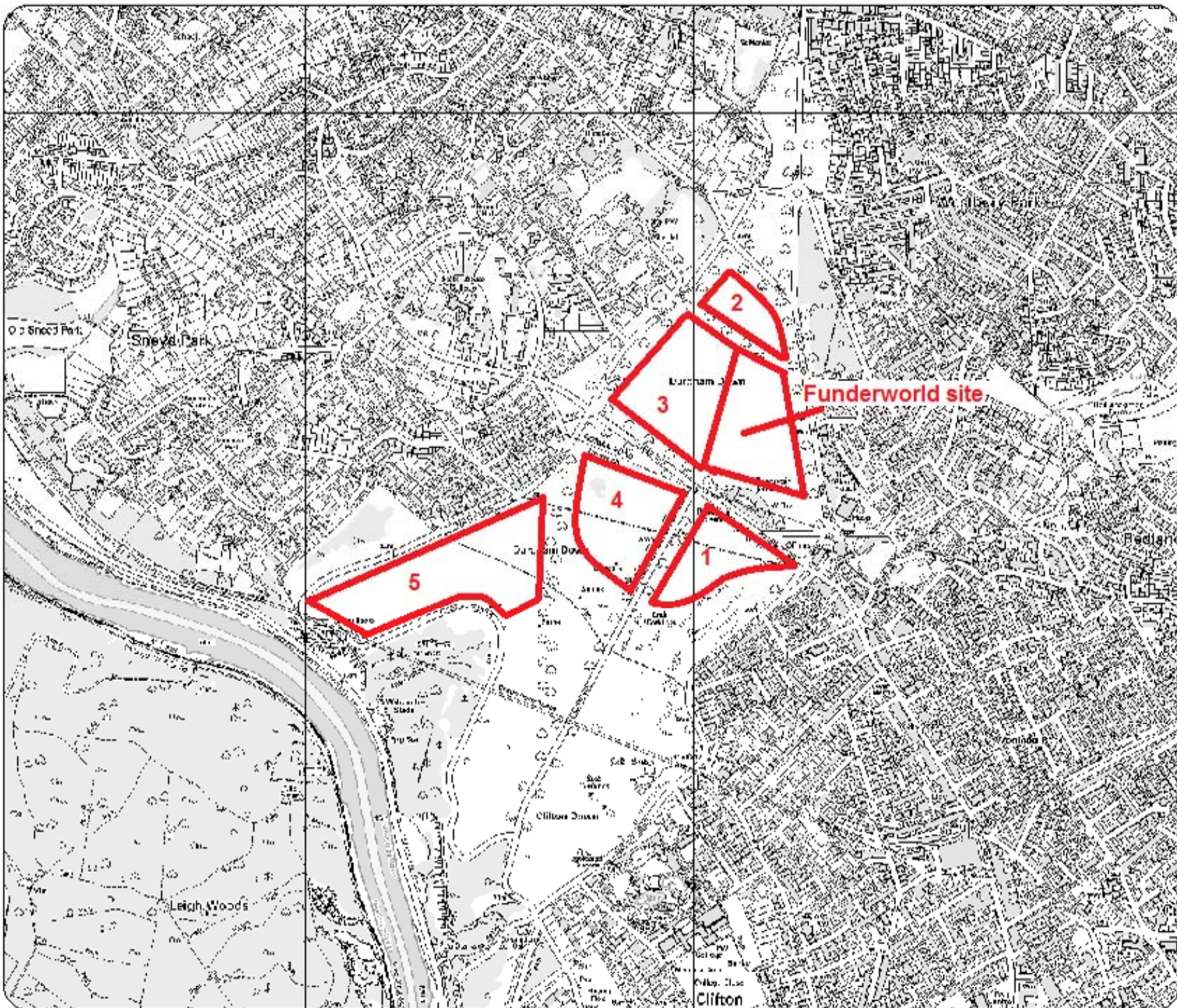
Appendices:

Appendix A

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers:

None



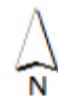
Bristol City Council
Neighbourhoods

Event locations

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ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE

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