

DISCLAIMER

The attached minutes are DRAFT minutes. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information, statements and decisions recorded in them, their status will remain that of a draft until such time as they are confirmed as a correct record at the subsequent meeting.

Clifton and Durdham Downs (Bristol) Act 1861

**Minutes of the Downs Committee
held on 13th April 2015 at 4.00 pm
at Brunel House**

Present:

City Councillors

- P The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor
Councillor Alastair Watson (Chair)

- P Councillor Peter Abraham
- P Councillor Martin Fodor
- P Councillor Glenise Morgan
- P Councillor Mahmadur Khan
- P Councillor Bill Payne
- P Colin Smith

Merchant Venturers

- P Chris Curling (Master)

- P Anthony Brown
- A Andrew Densham
- P Francis Greenacre
- P Dayrell McArthur
- P Tim Ross
- P Sir James Tidmarsh

Also in attendance:

Andrew Gordon - Estates Management
John Williams – Parks and Caretaking
Ben Skuse – Downs Maintenance Supervisor
Peter Watts - Events Team
Eleanor Cooke – Events Team
Richard Ennion – Environmental Improvement
Manager

Anita Randen-Green – Finance
Richard Goldthorpe – City Design Group
Norman Cornthwaite - Democratic Services

25. Apologies for Absence and Introductions (Agenda Item No. 1)

Apologies were received from Andrew Densham.

26. Minutes of the Meeting held on 29th January 2015 (Agenda Item No. 2)

Resolved - that the Minutes be agreed as a correct record of the Meeting and signed by the Chair.

27. Declarations of interest (Agenda Item No. 3)

None were received.

28. Public Forum (Agenda Item No. 4)

Statements were received from Eileen Stonebridge, RIGS and Robert Westlake, FODAG. A copy of these statements is contained in the Minute Book.

29. Finance Report (Agenda Item No. 5)

Anita Randen-Green introduced the report and summarised it for everyone. The details of the 2014/15 Budget and 2015/16 Budget were noted. It was noted that the reserves have been reduced and that the Downs Committee could not fund works relating to rockfalls, etc. in the future. It was also noted that any balancing of the Budget is funded by BCC. It was agreed that the Downs Committee needs to raise income to fund projects to improve the Downs.

The issue of transport costs was raised and a breakdown of the costs was requested. (This information was subsequently provided and circulated to Members of the Downs Committee.) It was agreed that it would be helpful to separate the equipment and running costs in the future.

Resolved - (1) that the pressure on reserves caused by sharing costs on major works be noted;

(2) that the more challenging budgetary position for 2015/16 be noted ; and

(3) that options for increasing income to meet future spending requirements be examined.

30. Downs Management Report (Agenda Item No. 6)

Andrew Gordon introduced the report and summarised it for everyone.

The issue of the BBQ locations was debated at some length. It was felt that the sites adjacent to Parry's Lane were not suitable. The merits of the number of sites adjacent to Ladies Mile were carefully considered. The majority view was that the seven sites adjacent to Ladies Mile be chosen as BBQ locations. The voting was 11 for, 2 against.

It was noted that the work suggested by the Interpretation Sub Group would cost between £5,000 and £10,000.

Although the proposal to bolt and net the rock faces on the side of Bridge Road was noted, it was felt that removal of an appropriate amount of rock should be considered as an alternative. It was therefore agreed that Parsons Brinckerhoff be consulted to advise if this is feasible.

Landscape - It was noted that the total cost of the FODAG work was £20,000.

It was noted that because an external contractor now does the hay cut, there is a cost involved in delivering the bails of hay to the City Farms. It was therefore agreed that a contribution towards the delivery costs be requested from the City Farms.

Sea Walls Concession – Following a debate on this issue, it was agreed that a Sub Group should be established to consider the specification, etc.

Suicides in the Avon Gorge – It was noted that there is no evidence of an increase in the number of suicides and it is not practical to raise the height of the fences. It was noted however that there is a gap in the fencing by the Goat Pen and it was

agreed that a fence should be erected to fill this gap.

Resolved – (1) that the report be noted and that the recommendations in the report be agreed including the following:

(a) that the seven sites adjacent to Ladies Mile be chosen as BBQ locations (and not Parry's Lane);

(b) that Parsons Brinckerhoff be consulted to advise if the removal of an appropriate amount of rock on the side of Bridge Road as an alternative to bolting and netting the rock faces is feasible

(c) that a contribution towards the delivery costs of bails of hay be requested from the City Farms;

(d) that a Sub Group be established to consider the specification, etc. of the Sea Walls Concession; and

(e) that a fence should be erected to fill this gap by the Goat Pen.

31. Delegated and Upcoming Events Proposed on The Downs
(Agenda Item No. 7)

Peter Watts introduced the report and summarised it for everyone. It was noted that discussions on site fees are on going.

Resolved – (1) that the events and filming activity that has taken place on The Downs under delegated powers be noted; and

(2) that the proposed future events to take place on The Downs between Committee meetings be noted.

32. Operational Terms of Reference (Agenda Item No. 8)

Richard Ennion introduced the report and summarised it for everyone.

It was noted that the BCC Membership changes in May of each year.

Resolved – (1) that the Draft Operational Terms of Reference be agreed; and

(2) that it be noted that more work is to be done on the document.

33. Clifton and Durdham Downs Place and Movement (Agenda Item No. 9)

Andrew Gordon introduced the covering report and summarised it for everyone.

Richard Goldthorpe summarised the brief.

Resolved – that the City Design Group be authorised to produce an options paper for the Downs Committee.

34. Any Other Business

- (i) Green Flag – It was agreed that the Green Flag outside the Tea Rooms be replaced with a flag celebrating Bristol 2015 this year.
- (ii) Play Area – The quote for nearly £10,000 for the turf was not considered acceptable. It was agreed that the bench and matting work should go ahead.
- (iii) Green Capital Event – Richard Ennion advised that he had been invited to an event in Brussels and invited views on what he should say there.
- (iv) Councillor Alastair Watson – The Committee noted that it was his last Meeting as Lord Mayor and everyone thanked him for his contribution to the work of the Committee.
- (v) Colin Smith - Committee noted that it was his last Meeting as he is standing down as a Councillor and everyone thanked him for his contribution over the years to the work of the Committee.

(The Meeting ended at 6.10 pm.)

Lord Mayor