

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
DOWNS COMMITTEE
HELD ON 2ND JULY 2012 AT 11.00 AM
AT MERCHANTS' HALL, THE PROMENADE, CLIFTON
BRISTOL BS8 3NH.**

P The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor
Peter Main (in the Chair)

P Councillor Davies)
A Councillor Goulandris) 6 City Councillors
P Councillor Hugill)
P Councillor Janke)
P Councillor Khan)
P Councillor Morgan)

P David Marsh (Master))
P Anthony Brown)
P Francis Greenacre) 6 Merchant Venturers
P Tom Hood)
A Peter Rilett)
P Sir James Tidmarsh)

DWN

38.7/12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Goulandris, Peter Rilett and Tony Whitlock.

DWN

39.7/12 MINUTES - DOWNS COMMITTEE – 23RD APRIL 2012

**RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting of the
Downs Committee held on 23rd April
2012 be confirmed as a correct record
and signed by the Chair.**

**DWN
40.7/12**

PUBLIC FORUM

At the invitation of the Lord Mayor, Mr Roger Garrett, a representative of FODAG explained that at the beginning of June he had sent a statement to the Clerk of the Downs Committee which set out the legal relationship between Bristol City Council and Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge.

The Clerk recalled receiving the statement and apologised that it had not been circulated in advance of the meeting.

Mr Garrett provided a brief overview of the legal relationship which was duly noted by the Committee.

It was agreed that the Clerk would circulate the statement to Members of the Downs Committee following the meeting.

Action RK

**DWN
41.7/12**

CHANGES TO DOWNS MEMBERSHIP

At Bristol City Council's Annual Meeting on Tuesday 15th May 2012, Councillor Peter Main was elected Lord Mayor and will therefore be the Chairman of the Downs Committee for the Municipal Year 2012/13.

The Outside Bodies Committee agreed the Councillor membership of the Downs Committee at their meeting on the 17th May 2012 as follows:-

Barbara Janke (LD)
Glenise Morgan (LD)
Christopher Davies (LD)
Brenda Hugill (L)
Mahmadur Khan (L)
John Goulandris (Con)

RESOLVED - that the membership changes be noted.

**DWN
42.7/12**

IMPROVEMENTS TO DOWNS PLAY AREA – UPDATE

The Committee considered a report of the Service Director – Environment and Leisure (agenda item 5) requesting consideration

of the design of a bespoke playground in keeping with the Down's unique environment which had been commissioned by the Committee in July 2011.

The following main issues were noted during the discussion that took place:-

- It was clarified by officers that at this stage the design was a tool to pursue funding for the installation of a replacement playground. Once funding has been secured the design will be subject to consultation with stakeholders.
- Members raised some strong arguments both for and against full or semi-enclosure of the playground (eg fencing) to make the site dog free. It was agreed that as this was a contentious issue, the views to inform the decision needed to be much wider than those of the Downs Committee and should therefore form part of the stakeholder consultation process.
- It was suggested that the following groups be included in the consultation process to inform the more detailed design of the play area:-
 - the Downs team
 - Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project (AG&DWP)
 - FODAG
 - The local Neighbourhood Partnership
 - Governors of local Primary Schools within walking distance of the play area
 - Local youth forums
 - Downs Committee
- It was agreed that Cllrs Janke and Khan would be invited to the AG&DWP meeting when it considers the design of the play area as part of the consultation process. The Committee requested a report back from the AGDWP following this meeting. **Action: RE**
- It was agreed that a progress report on the Downs Play Area be brought back to the next meeting on 10th September 2012
Action: JK

RESOLVED - (1) that the Committee approves the proposed design in principle as a tool to pursue funding for the installation of a replacement playground.

(2) that the Committee supports the consultation process outlined for

**the development of the design,
once funding has been secured.**

**DWN
43.7/12**

BRISTOL ZOO CAR PARK – TEMPORARY COACH PARKING

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Neighbourhoods (agenda item no. 6) requesting approval of the proposed variation to the existing agreement between Bristol City Council and the Trustees of Bristol Clifton and West of England Zoological Society.

The following main issues were noted during the discussion that took place:-

- Concerns were raised about the delay already experienced by cars getting into the car park causing congestion on the main road and whether the proposed temporary coach parking would exacerbate the problem. In response Tim Wilson, Director of Estates, Bristol Zoo indicated that the temporary coach park will only be used at off peak times, from September until Easter excluding weekends and school holidays. Transport planning consultants involved in developing the proposal will be retained to establish the most effective entrance and exit arrangements for coaches.
- The car park is manned to minimise risk and the coach parking will be dealt with by the same members of staff . Tim Wilson agreed to take back the concerns raised above and ensure that staff were appropriately briefed. **Action: Tim Wilson**
- Tim Wilson confirmed that the Zoo had a travel plan and were in early discussions with park and ride operators and UWE regarding dedicated public transport to the Zoo. It was agreed that a copy of the travel plan would be circulated to Members of the Committee for information. **Action: TW/RK**

RESOLVED - (1) that the proposed variation to the existing agreement between Bristol City Council and the Trustees of Bristol Clifton and West of England Zoological Society, to permit parking for up to three coaches at off peak times from September

until Easter excluding weekends and school holidays be approved.

- (2) that a progress report be brought back to the Committee in due course.**

**DWN
44.7/12**

REPORT OF THE DOWNS RANGER

The Committee considered a report of the Service Director, Environment and Leisure (agenda item no. 7) updating on works and developments carried out since the last meeting.

The following main issues were noted during the discussion that took place:-

- Downs Jubilee day on 4th June. Comments were made that the event involving many thousands of people had been very well organised. The Committee wished to put on record its thanks to all those involved, particularly to the many volunteers who gave their time freely to make the event a deserved success.
 - Green Flag. The Downs has retained its Green Flag Status. The judges commented favourably on the management of the Downs and on the knowledge and enthusiasm of all stakeholders. The Committee congratulated all those involved with this achievement.
 - Future 'Downs Days'. The Committee was mindful that a significant amount of resource had gone into the organisation of the Downs Day in 2011 and 2012 and care had to be taken that resources were not being diverted from the day to day management of the Downs. The Committee was therefore unable to commit to an annual event on the Downs, however would be prepared to consider any themed proposal that came in for 2013, particularly if it was able to attract additional sponsorship. It was noted that in order to allow enough lead-in time to organise a large scale event for summer 2013 an application would need to be considered by the Downs Committee by the end of December 2012 at the latest. It was agreed that a provisional date for a Downs Day in 2013 would be put in the events diary as soon as possible. **Action PW.**

- It was important that the local Ward Councillors were kept informed of issues and events on the Downs, particularly if they had an impact on residents. **Action RW**
- As the Downs was a resource for the whole of the City it was important for events to be publicised as widely as possible. The Downs Ranger clarified that the use of the football pitches were not exclusive to Downs League and were currently available fortnightly to other football teams.
- Replacement of frontline equipment. The total cost of replacing the tractor drawn mower and custom built trailer was approximately £40,000. Within the Downs budget there is a plant and equipment budget of £8000 and a leasing budget of £22,450. To purchase the new equipment outright would therefore require a call on the Downs reserve to meet the funding gap. However, the acquisition could be funded internally by BCC at a total annual cost over five years of around £9200, thus spreading the cost to Downs Committee. The title to the asset would initially be with BCC but pass to the Committee once the loan is repaid.

- RESOLVED -**
- (1) that replacement equipment for the tractor drawn mower and the trailer used for transporting football equipment is acquired and funded over five years by a loan arranged with the City Council.**
 - (2) that the Committee agrees to consider a future application for a themed Downs Day Event in 2013 and that a provisional date be set in the events diary.**

**DWN
45.7/12**

**DELEGATED AND UPCOMING EVENTS PROPOSED ON THE
DOWNS**

The Committee considered a report of the Service Director, Communication and Marketing (agenda item no. 8);

- noting events and filming that have taken place between committee meetings under Delegated Powers; and
- noting proposed future events between committee meetings.

The following main issues were noted during the discussion that took place:-

- the Committee requested information on Funderworld's contribution to the Lord Mayors fund this year. **Action: PW**
- the Committee extended thanks to Jemma Towers, a Graduate Trainee who has been working with the events team and who was now coming to the end of her term with the council. Jemma has been instrumental in the development and promotion of the personal trainer permits across the city, including the Downs.
- It was suggested that to promote filming activity, the council should look at meeting the cost of insurance liability for small scale productions on the Downs and across the City. This would encourage small companies to make films and in doing so promote the City. It was agreed that this would be explored and an update included in the next report to the Committee. **Action: PW**
- Race for Life - parking. It was requested that in future when major events were happening on the Downs, an events officer be present for the whole duration and that the cost be built into the site fee. It was important to understand the demands of an event and to be able to respond to issues when they arise. In response Peter Watts indicated that the request was timely as a new Manager had recently been appointed and he would take this back to her in order to explore options. An update would be provided at the next meeting. **Action: PW**
 - It was important for event organisers to be properly briefed by the events team and the Downs Ranger indicated that he wished to be more involved in this process. **Action: PW**
- In response to comments on illegally parked cars on the Downs generally, the Downs Ranger confirmed that the remit for the wheel clamping scheme was currently restricted to Ladies Mile and Circular Road.

However, the trial period had now concluded so the time was right to consider extending the scheme. It was agreed that this would be looked at by the traffic sub-group and a report brought back to the next Committee. **Action RW**

- RESOLVED -**
- (1) that the events and filming activity that has taken place on The Downs under delegated powers be noted.**
 - (2) that the proposed future events to take place on the Downs between Committee meetings be noted.**

DWN

46.7/12

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- RESOLVED - that the next meeting of the Downs Committee be held on 10th September 2012 at 4.30 pm at The Council House, College Green, Bristol BS1 5TR.**

(The meeting ended at 12.40 pm)

CHAIR