

Bristol City Council

Minutes of the Downs Committee

1 July 2019 at 11.00 am



Members Present:-

Councillors: Councillor Jos Clark, Councillor Peter Abraham, Councillor Donald Alexander, Councillor Kye Dudd, Councillor Christopher Davies, Councillor Mike Langley, Antony Kenny, Ross Ancell, Jonathon Baker, Simon Cooper and Francis Greenacre

Officers in Attendance:- Sam Wilcock, Ben Skuse, Mandy Leivers, Kevin Jay, Amanda Sharpe

1. Welcome, Introductions and Safety Information

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting and introductions were made.

Councillor Jos Clark was introduced as the new Lord Mayor of Bristol City Council and therefore Chair of the Downs Committee.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Paula O'Rourke and Mary Prior and Tim Ross from the Merchant Venturers.

3. Confirmation of Membership Changes

It was confirmed that following the Annual Full Council meeting on 21st May 2019, Councillor Jos Clark would chair the Downs Committee as Lord Mayor.

Councillor Mike Langley was also welcomed as a new member.

Councillor Cleo Lake and Barry Clark were thanked for their service the previous year.

4. Declarations of Interest

There were none.



5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes were agreed as a correct record.

6. Public Forum

The following statements were received:

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|----|----------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. | Chris Buckall | Use of the Downs |
| 2. | Duncan Ogilvie | Flytipping |
| 3. | Lee Scott | Licence Fee for use of the Downs |
| 4. | Jon Craton | Unauthorised Encampments |
| 5. | Grace Emmerson | Tree Planting |
| 6. | Paul Garrett | By-laws to manage Camper Vans |
| 7. | Susan Carter | Zoo Parking |

Those who submitted statement numbers 2, 4 and 7 were in attendance.

All the statements were noted.

7. Matters Arising from the Movement and Place Sub Group

It was reported that at their meeting of the 25th June, the Sub Group had requested further information on plans for the A4018 including a traffic report in order to present a balanced and informed recommendation to the next full Downs Committee in September.

8. Downs Maintenance Report & Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project

During this item, the Downs Committee agreed (with one objection) that the meeting could be recorded however they asked that requests to record meetings be addressed through the Chair.

It was highlighted for information, that the Downs Committee was not a Committee of Bristol City Council but had agreed to follow the principles of public meetings of the Council such as publically available agendas, minutes and the inclusion of public forum.

Ben Skuse presented his report.

In response officers were thanked for their hard work to alleviate the ongoing effects of traveller's encampments on the Downs. Members of the Downs Committee asked that Bristol City Council and the Mayor be pressed to take a more active role and reconsider the option of a blanket injunction.



9. Events Report

The officer presented the report which had been included within the agenda papers. The following comments were made in response;

- The Events and Finance Sub Group would discuss the incident and Funderworld (**ACTION: AS to report when appropriate**)
- Officers and residents had met the organisers of PRIDE and a phone number would be provided in case of any concerns during the event.
- A Member reported that in his opinion the Foodies Festival which had taken place had been too heavy in food outlets and had less of an education element than in the past. The demonstrations that had taken place also appeared to be oversubscribed. Officers agreed to report comments back to the organisers for consideration in terms of their programme the following year.

It was agreed that the last meeting of the Events and Finance Sub Group would be discussed at the end of the agenda in private session. This was due to elements of commercial sensitivity within the report.

10 Finance Update

The officer presented the report of actual results for 2018-19 and there were no questions asked.

11 Friends of Downs and Avon Gorge Report

Robert Westlake from the Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge group presented a statement to the Committee which was also circulated. Within the statement it was confirmed that a display would run for three weeks from the 1st October to celebrate the Downs with a Festival of Photography in one of the advertising 'roadside windows'. There would be a launch event at 6pm.

12 Any Other Business

There was none.

13 Date of Next Meeting

The next Downs Committee meeting would take place on 23rd September at 2pm in City Hall.

14 Matters Arising From Events and Finance Sub Group

It was agreed that this item be moved to the end of the agenda to facilitate discussions which were of a commercially sensitive nature within exempt session.



The Master, Tony Kenny outlined the notes of the most recent Events and Finance Sub Group. The following points were made which can be recorded in the public minutes:

- The Sub Group continued to consider the physical effect on the Downs of the large number of events that took place.
- The Sub Group would continue to investigate an improved policy for permission for the use of the Downs by businesses such as fitness groups (**ACTION: SW to report back with any further information regarding the incident raised**).
- A discussion had taken place with the Downs Football League and no complaints were recorded, apart from the ongoing improvements requested for the changing rooms.

Meeting ended at 12.30 pm

CHAIR _____

