

Bristol City Council

Minutes of the Downs Committee

8 April 2019 at 2.00 pm



Members Present:-

Councillors: Councillor Cleo Lake (Chair), Councillor Peter Abraham, Councillor Donald Alexander, Councillor Barry Clark, Councillor Kye Dudd, Councillor Paula O'Rourke, Antony Kenny, Ross Ancell, Jonathon Baker, Simon Cooper, Francis Greenacre, Mary Prior and Tim Ross

Officers in Attendance:-

Ben Skuse, Ann-Marie Leighton and Jemma Prince

1. Welcome, Introductions and Safety Information

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting.

2. Apologies and introductions

Apologies were received from Councillor Christopher Davies.

3. Minutes of last meeting - Monday 28th January 2019

The minutes were agreed with the following minor corrections;

- Item 13 title – swap 'British' for 'Bristol'.
- Item 13 first bullet point – add word 'fewer'.
- Item 14 penultimate paragraph substitute 'helping the Downs Football League *share their vision*'

4. Declarations of interest

There were none.

5. Public Forum

- (1) Robert Westlake – Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge



The Committee agreed to a request to display some items of litter at the entrance to the Downs for a few days in order to highlight the ongoing problem of managing litter on the Downs.

(2) Peter Weeks – Downs for People

The Committee stated that they were aware of the issues and concerns outlined and that whilst discussions were ongoing with the zoo they were unable to comment further. The results of those discussions would be considered by the Finance and Events Sub Committee and ultimately would return to the July meeting of the full Committee.

(3) Ms D Holvey

The statement was noted.

6. Matters Arising From the Events and Finance Group - Wednesday 27th February 2019

There were no further comments on the report.

7. Events Report (Ann-Marie Leighton)

The officer presented the report which had been included within the agenda papers. She was thanked for her time and there were no further questions raised.

8. Downs Maintenance Report (Ben Skuse)

Ben Skuse introduced the report and the following points were commented on:

- (1) The breakdown of the football trailer had been unfortunate however a spare trailer was not a realistic option. The Downs League had now been able to reconfigure the fixtures that were lost. In response, Councillor Dudd highlighted the need for reviewed focus on improving the quality of facilities for the Downs League to reflect the increased fees.
- (2) The new lighting proposal on Observatory Hill had been altered to remove the third unit which had been proposed for out in the open. By a show of hands the two other units were approved. It was reiterated however that it was the responsibility of the applicant to ensure correct planning permission.
RESOLVED: That the two lighting units proposed be approved as detailed in the proposal.
- (3) Funderworld had arrived on site for their annual event. In response to queries, it was confirmed that permission to advertise had not been granted and that an advance Advertising and Marketing



Plan would be agreed if the event took place in 2020. Councillor Abraham thanked officers for resolving issues regarding the advertising boards that had appeared.

- (4) Officers had investigated some unauthorised parking outside the Retreat Café. Some signage would be displayed and cycle lanes lines re-painted. It had been established that the Bristol Nordic walking group had been parking there to unload equipment and officers were investigating helping them with some storage options. Enforcement was also raised as an option.
- (5) Jonathon Baker offered his support to Council Officers to further explore a policy for those using the parks as a source of business.

Mandy Leivers presented her report of Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife project education programme updates (as included within the agenda papers. Mandy was thanked for her work and there were no further questions.

9. Sea Walls - Planning Sea Walls Café – Revised Application Including Re-Design of Rooftop Terrace

Jonathan Baker reported that the application to the planning committee had passed. The application had now been forwarded to the Secretary of State who had planned their site visit for September 2019. If successful, the build would take place over Winter and the premises would open in the Spring 2020. The Architect was putting together a brief for the tender process and a report would return to the July Committee meeting.

10 Planning Application - Proposed Pedestrian-Cycle Bridge over Bridge Valley Road near the Junction Bridge Valley Road - Ladies Mile - Clifton Down, Bristol

The Committee noted the report. It was also noted that:

1. The bridge would also require Secretary of State approval and consent of the Downs Committee as landowner.
2. The bridge would be privately funded, including as required for maintenance.
3. It was not a correct assertion to state that the bridge design had been developed in consultation with the Downs Committee as no decision had been taken by the Downs Committee to support the design.
4. At the appropriate time, a full report would be expected considering all available options and further discussion was not appropriate until that time.



11 Any Other Business

1. The Lord Mayor highlighted and the Downs Committee acknowledged that 2019 marked 25years since the assault of Marlon Thomas on the Downs at a fun fair.
2. The Suicide Prevention Team, a voluntary group, reported there activities to the Downs Committee. Three suicides had been prevented and countless people spoken to who were in need of support. The group were working to increase awareness of their organisation and sought an increased connection with the Downs Committee.
3. It was agreed that a site visit of the 'Leisure Loop' would take place on the afternoon of 20th May 2019. Further details would be provided to the Committee in due course.
4. Consideration was given to the toilets on the Downs joining the Community Toilet Scheme and therefore be included on the map of the City conveniences. Although supported in principle, it was highlighted that the expectation would be for efficient opening times. It was established that a small fee was provided to St. Michaels Care Home to provide that service and it would be checked whether the opening times were sufficient to be included within the Community Toilet Scheme. It was confirmed that toilets within the new café would be part of the Community Toilet Scheme.
ACTION: It was agreed that Councillors Abraham and Don Alexander along with Jonathan Baker would form a sub group to investigate further, led by Councillor Alexander.
5. Thanks were extended to the outgoing Lord Mayor for chairing and guiding the Downs Committee during the year and service to the City as a whole.

12 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for the 1st July 2019 at Merchants Hall.

Meeting ended at 3.00 pm

CHAIR _____



