

Summary of the Downs Committee

Notes of Events & Finance Sub Group Meeting

9th September 2020

Members:

Ross Ancell - Merchant Venturer (Master and Chair)

Councillor Peter Abraham

Councillor Don Alexander

Jonathon Baker - Merchant Venturer

Councillor Barry Clark

Councillor Paula O'Rourke

Peter Rilett – Merchant Venturer

Tim Ross – Merchant Venturer

Bristol City Council Officers:

Kevin Jay – Finance

Jeremy Livitt – Democratic Services

Amanda Sharpe – Events Officer

Ben Skuse – Grounds Supervisor

Louise De Cordova – Democratic Services Manager

Jeremy Livitt – Democratic Services Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for this meeting.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting – 26th February 2020

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Events and Finance Sub-Committee of 10th July 2020 be confirmed as a correct record of the discussion subject to the inclusion of Councillor Paula O'Rourke as being in attendance.

Matters Arising

Car Parking Contract – Members received an update on the latest legal situation concerning this contract.

Trampoline – Ben Skuse confirmed that he had not yet received a response to his e-mail reply following a recent proposal from an operator to bring a trampoline on the Downs. He stated that he would pursue this. **Action: Ben Skuse**

3. Events Update

Amanda Sharpe introduced this report and made the following comments:

Breaking Bread

- This event had been a very big success
- After some initial difficulties, it was becoming much easier to book for it
- It was very well organised and efficiently run
- Due to a run of very good weather, there had been better than anticipated turnover

The following comments were made:

- As the weather becomes colder, consideration would need to be made concerning what measures could be put in place to make them more attractive
- If this event were to continue, the issue of grounds maintenance would need to be carefully considered
- It was noted that the original proposal was scheduled to run until the end of October 2020

Downs Circus

- This event was due to open on 23rd September 2020 and to run until 11th October 2020
- Due to the need to maintain social distancing measures, the capacity would be reduced to 390
- Following the recent Government announcement of the “Rule of Six”, there had been no further guidelines concerning the impact for events. Under the existing arrangements, events over 30 can take place if they are not private and run by businesses. Therefore, this event could operate as currently indicated
- SAGE heavily scrutinises all events approved for taking place on the Downs. Bristol City Council’s Health and Safety Adviser will be carrying out a site visit to ensure compliance

Other Proposed Events

- Details of other proposed events for 2021 were set out
- It was not yet clear for a number of the events what size limit there would be for 2021
- The Race for Life Event would not be taking place in 2020

It was noted that a number of organisations had requested a COVID-19 clause for 2021. The Sub-Group indicated that it was minded to agree this subject to details **Action: Jonathon Baker/Amanda Sharpe to advise event organisers accordingly.**

Religious Group – Request for a Prayer Group on the Downs in late September 2020

The Sub-Group noted this request for a prayer group of 30 people on the Downs from late September 2020.

It was noted that the most recent announcement concerning groups of six might affect the viability of this proposal. In addition, it was noted that the events policy did not allow events involving religious groups to operate unless they were open to the public.

Decision: This request was therefore refused.

Action: Amanda Sharpe

Pantomimes/Theatre Plays

The Sub-Group noted that there had been several informal requests for pantomimes/theatre plays to operate on the Downs. It was noted that such events could take several months to organise. Members agreed that the model adopted by Breaking Bread for the food industry could be adopted for the arts industry.

Action: Amanda Sharpe to ask the Arts Team to approach Theatre Organisations and approach Team Love to see if they could co-ordinate such a proposal.

4. Finance Update

Kevin Jay introduced this report. He explained that the original anticipated income (i.e. the budgeted income) for 2020/21 was set at the same level as the previous year, since this was pre-COVID 19. However, mainly as a result of COVID 19, there is now a current forecast financial pressure of approximately £127,000.

5 Any Other Business

Football on the Downs

It was noted that the Downs League would be re-starting on 26th September 2020 without the use of dressing rooms. Whilst toilets would be available, there would be a fee to open them up and clean them on each occasion. A COVID risk assessment for each team was awaited.

6 Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of this Sub-Group would be held at 2pm on Wednesday 28th October 2020.

The meeting ended at 3.30pm