

**Downs Committee**  
**Events & Finance Sub-Group Meeting Minutes**  
**1<sup>st</sup> November 2022**

**Members:**

David Freed (Chair)  
Jonathan Baker  
Peter Rilett  
Cllr Jos Clark  
Cllr Steve Smith  
Cllr Kye Dudd

**Officers:**

Stefan Edwards (Events Officer)  
Kevin Jay (Finance Officer)  
Amy Rodwell (Democratic Services Officer)

**Apologies:**

Cllr Katy Grant  
Patrick Despard

**1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022**

The Chair introduced the item and asked Members if they had any comments on the minutes of the previous meeting.

There was a discussion around outstanding actions from the previous meeting and the following points were noted:

- The Chair had received a copy of the North Car Park lease, which was circulated to Committee members, but more information was required specifically around the settlement terms for the remainder of the lease. **ACTION: Democratic Services Officer to provide an update on the terms for the remainder of the lease for the North Car Park to members of the Sub-Group.**
- There was a discussion around resurfacing of the North Car Park and improving the appearance of the car park in general, also ensuring that it is secure. The developers want to use some of the space for a site compound so there was a need to establish the use of the space.
- There was still no update on the proposed plans for commercial operations charges in parks, but this would be chased. **ACTION: Cllr Smith to request an update on charges for commercial operations on the Downs and report back to the Sub-Committee at the next meeting.**

**2. Finance Update**

The Finance Officer introduced the report and highlighted key points. Discussion points are as follows:

- It was noted that the Committee may need to make some difficult decisions on cuts to the budget.
- It was noted that the Committee do the upmost to balance the budget, but this has been an issue in the past. Members urged that the Committee generate as much income as possible in order to level out the costs.
- Concerns were raised around the cuts to services in parks costing the council more over the long term.
- The Parks budget was part of a general fund in which Council Taxpayers contribute but the service was working towards being self-funded.
- It was noted that the report for the January meeting would be more robust as it would be closer to the Budget Council meeting.
- Fees for events were raised citywide due to pressures on the industry and it was noted that fees for events on the Downs would be calculated on a case by case basis.
- It was noted that Forwards Festival may decide to run their event over 3 days in future which would generate more income.
- It was noted that the Downs changing rooms were in bad condition which may have been part of the reason why there was a decline in the number of football teams playing on the Downs.
- The Finance Officer predicted that Democratic Services fees could increase.
- The Finance Officer noted that most event fees had been received and that the Committee was on track to receive the remaining funds due course.
- The Finance Officer noted that there was an accounting error which meant that funds for the ice cream can licence had not been received to the Downs Committee budget, but this had now been rectified and the funds would arrive in due course.
- The Events Officer ran through the events that took place in 2022 updating on charges and possible future plans for each.

### **3. Events Update – to include update on accommodating smaller events**

It was noted that the events update had been discussed elsewhere on the agenda.

There was a discussion around accommodating smaller events on the Downs. The Events Officer had suggested that the fees are in line with those charged citywide, but the Committee advised that they would like the opportunity to review before they are agreed.

It was suggested that the Events Team do what they can to generate more income through events without driving away the event organisers.

### **4. Site Permissions – Foodies Festival**

The Events Officer provided an update on site permissions for Foodies Festival.

- Site Permissions would not be renewing the license for Foodies Festival in 2023. Members expressed that it should be the Downs Committee taking these types of decisions in future considering advice from the relevant colleagues and that they would have liked to of been briefed.
- It was noted that Site Permissions and Licensing were due to meet with the event organisers for a de brief and the Events Officer would provide an update following that meeting.

**ACTION: Events Officer to provide an update following the de brief with Foodies Festival.**

- Members noted the need for a similar event if Foodies Festival would not be going ahead next year.

**5. AOB**

There was none.

**Close 11:30am**