

MINUTES: of the meeting of the Basingstoke Canal Joint Management Committee held at the Basingstoke Canal Centre, Mytchett, at 10.00am on Friday 19 October 2001

Members

Hampshire County Council

- a Councillor J V Bryant
- a Councillor R A Culver
- a Councillor S Leyland
- Councillor A W Rice TD

Surrey County Council

- Mr W D Barker OBE
- Mrs M King-Hele
- John Phillips
- Mrs Elise Whiteley

Hampshire Districts:

Hart District Council

- Councillor R Feltham
- Councillor S Wallis

Surrey Districts:

Guildford Borough Council

- a Councillor Mrs A Gunning

Rushmoor Borough Council

- Councillor C Balchin
- Councillor J J Wall

Runnymede Borough Council

- Councillor A G Collins

Woking Borough Council

- Councillor Mrs M Gammon

Surrey Heath Borough Council

- Councillor Mrs C M Whitcroft

Special Interest Groups:

English Nature

- a Mrs C Chatters

Surrey and Hampshire Canal Society

- Mr P Redway

a = Absent

[All references to Items and Appendices refer to the Agenda for the meeting bound with the Minutes]

10/01 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN** [Item 1]

Resolved: That Councillor Alan Rice be elected Chairman for 2001/2002.

11/01 **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN** [Item 2]

Resolved: That Mr Bill Barker be elected Vice-Chairman for 2001/2002

12/01 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** [Item 3]

Apologies were received from Mrs Chatters and Councillors Bryant, Leyland and Gunning. There were no substitutions.

13/01 **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING: 2 March 2001** [Item 4]

Confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

14/01 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** [Item 5]

There were no declarations of interest.

15/01 **PROCEDURAL MATTERS** [Item 6]

There were no procedural matters.

16/01 **CANAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT** [Item 7]

Paragraph 2.8 - The Canal Director reported that the survey had shown that the Locks were safe, but that there was a problem with water loss.

Paragraph 3.8 – The Committee expressed its thanks to the Canal Director and to all the volunteers who had helped during the visit from the representatives of the Canal D'Orleans. Particular thanks were given to Paddy Field for his contribution.

LT

Paragraph 4.1 – Noted that the tree projects were to remove trees to allow more light into the Canal.

Noted the report.

17/01 **BOAT LICENSING** [Item 8]

Mrs Gammon declared a non-pecuniary interest as the owner of "Maggie G" the operation of which is funded by charitable donations. Mrs Gammon was invited to remain in the meeting.

Noted that the group for powered craft was determined by length and for unpowered craft by the number of seats. The arrangements for houseboats are independent of the canal authority with the money being paid directly to Surrey County Council.

RESOLVED:

- a) That licence fees for craft using the Canal be increased by the amounts outlined in Item 8.

- b) That the Canal Director be authorised to issue boat licenses for special events etc at his discretion.
- c) That a charge of 25% of the standard cruising fee be made for all charity boats and that no charge be made for the mooring license for these boats.
- d) That the Canal Director be authorised to agree prices for any new licensing arrangements, for such matters as the Dry Dock transit license, the Annual License for boats moored on the River Wey etc, that arise from discussion with user groups, subject to these arrangements being reported to the next meeting.

LT

18/01 **REPORT OF THE HONORARY TREASURER** [Item 7]

There was considerable discussion on the issue of debt charges. It was reported that originally Surrey County Council had borrowed money to restore the Canal and at that time it was agreed that it and the relevant Surrey District Councils would split the repayments. Mrs Whitcroft reported that there had been all party support at Surrey Heath for their decision to pay their total grant funding to the Canal Authority. Members requested further information on the situation with the other District Councils before deciding on the way forward.

SL

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the final accounts of the Basingstoke Canal Authority for the year ended 31 March 2001 be approved and that the net revenue deficit of £499 be transferred from the Reserve Account.
- (b) That the revised budget for 2001/02 be agreed, subject to the resolution of the debt charges issue.
- (c) That the capital programme be amended as follows:
 - Refit of Workboat reduced from £30,000 to £25,000
 - Canal Centre Improvements included in the Mooring Basin reserve and increased to £110,000, by transferring £5,000 from the 'Refit of Workboat' and £10,000 from unallocated reserves.
- (d) That the proposed forward budget for 2002/03 be agreed and submitted for consideration to the constituent authorities subject to the resolution of the debt charges issue.
- (e) That the proposal to include debt charges in the contributions from the Surrey Districts and repay them to Surrey County Council be deferred pending further information.

SL

19/01 **RISK MANAGEMENT** [Item 10]

Mr Barker asked if it would be possible for him to see the risk assessment of why it is necessary to have two rangers on standby.

LT

Noted that the appropriate County Council would be liable for any loss arising from structural failure. Both Surrey and Hampshire carry their own insurance.

RESOLVED: That the Basingstoke Canal Authority continue to take all reasonable precautions towards minimising any risks that may be associated with the Canal and that adequate resources be made available for this purpose from the budget at the discretion of the Canal Director. In the event of an emergency costs should be met from the indicated reserve fund.

LT

20/01 **BACKPUMPING SCHEME – PROGRESS REPORT** [Item 11]

The Chairman circulated copies of a letter he had written to the Chairman of the Environment Agency asking him to find a solution to the problem. Members noted that there are a number of authorities around the country in a similar position and any decision on the Basingstoke Canal could set a precedent nationally.

RESOLVED: That Surrey and Hampshire County Councils be requested to pursue the necessary legal routes to ensure that they are a Navigation Authority.

LC-G/LT

21/01 **THE WATERWAYS TRUST** [Item 12]**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Director explores the cost and scope of an initial funding assessment from the Waterways Trust with a view to having a completed study for the next JMC if cost and expected results seem reasonable.
- (b) That if (a) is successful the Trust be invited to a future JMC to present their ideas of how a partnership could work and to explore the relationship further.
- (c) That following (a) and (b) consideration be given to involvement in the regional strategic study.

LT

22/01 **CANAL CENTRE IMPROVEMENTS** [Item 13]

Some Members expressed concern at the possible expansion of the caravan area. They were concerned that it could cause traffic problems, that the close proximity of the water could be dangerous to families and there could be disturbance to local residents.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That £10,000 capital be approved for improvements to toilet and shower facilities.
- (b) That further investigation be carried out into costs for a play area and associated landscape improvements by an officer working group and provided that these do not exceed £20,000 that the work proceeds.
- (c) That grant funding, sponsorship etc be sought for an outdoor education trail.

23/01 **REPORT OF THE SURREY AND HAMPSHIRE CANAL SOCIETY**
[Item 14]

The Committee thanked the Society for the wonderful work they have done to help the Canal and asked the Chairman to write to the Society on their behalf.

AR

24/01 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS** [Item 15]

The next meeting would take place on a Friday at the end of March 2002. The exact date to be decided.

[Meeting Ended: 11.55am]

Chairman