

MINUTES: of the meeting of the Basingstoke Canal Joint Management Committee held at the Basingstoke Canal Centre, Mytchett, at 10.00am on Friday 17 March 2006

Members

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|---|---------------------------------------|
| Hampshire County Council | Surrey County Council |
| Councillor K G Chapman (Chairman) a | Mr John G Ades |
| a Councillor B T Gurden | Mrs Elizabeth Compton (Vice-Chairman) |
| Councillor P Hutcheson | a Mr John Doran |
| Councillor R J Kimber | Mrs Diana Smith |
| Hampshire Districts: | Surrey Districts: |
| Hart District Council | Guildford Borough Council |
| Councillor Kenneth Crookes | a Councillor Angela Gunning |
| a Councillor Wallace Vincent | |
| Rushmoor Borough Council | Runnymede Borough Council |
| Councillor C Balchin | Councillor J R Whiteley |
| Councillor J J Wall | |
| Co-opted Member Appointed by Committee | Surrey Heath Borough Council |
| a Cllr Alan Rice TD | Councillor Mrs C M Whitcroft |
| Mr Michael Gammon | Woking Borough Council |
| | a Councillor N Hinks |

Special Interest Groups:

- English Nature**
a Ms Vanessa Burley

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]

01/06 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS** [Item 1]

Apologies were received from Councillors Gurden, Vincent, Rice and Hinks, Mr Ades and Vanessa Burley.

02/06 **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING: 21 October 2006** [Item 4]

Officers apologised to the Committee that a Joint Consultative Committee had not taken place prior to this meeting. This was due to organisational changes at Surrey County Council and the appointment of a new Canal Director. A meeting will take place in April and the Canal Director will take over responsibility for arranging this meeting.

The minutes were confirmed and signed by the Chairman subject to the amendment of minute 24/05. At the end of the second sentence “July” to read “May”. [Noted that this work had begun and would be completed in time.]

03/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

None.

04/06 PROCEDURAL MATTERS [Item 4]

No questions or petitions were received.

05/06 UPDATE ON OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF BASINGSTOKE CANAL [Item 5]

Noted that this information had been incorporated into the report of the Canal Director.

06/06 CANAL DIRECTOR’S REPORT [Item 6]

The Chairman welcomed Ian Brown the new Canal Director to his first meeting. The Director gave a presentation highlighting some of the recent management issues and setting out the process for reviewing the options for the future management of the Canal. There would be a Steering Group and 3 project teams and it was hoped that it would be possible to produce a final report on the future management and funding of the Canal for the October meeting of the Committee. It was noted that the Leader of Surrey County Council had given an undertaking, subject to the decision of the Executive on 6 April, that the County Council would not reduce its funding for the Canal in the current year.

Noted that the director was putting together a bid for long term funding for bank side protection over a 10 year period from the European Union. Final costings were currently being drawn up

Noted the report and authorised the Canal Director to carry out the proposed reviews and actions outlined in the report as well as identifying new opportunities and potential sources of income. Members were asked to continue to consider the needs of the Canal when the business of their Council is undertaken and potential opportunities for future funding be identified and secured.

07/06 REPORT OF THE HONORARY TREASURER [Item 7]

The Committee were concerned at the shortfall in funding. It was felt that the cumulative affect of underfunding and therefore reduced maintenance was leading to the creation of more expensive work having to be done now and in the future. It was noted that the cumulative effect of underfunding in the last nine years, updated by inflation amounted to around £0.5m of lost revenue to the Canal.

Resolved:

- (a) That the Canal Director be authorised to take the necessary steps outlined in paragraph 3 to contain the net expenditure during 2006/07 to meet the shortfall in contributions from the partner authorities.
- (b) That Hart District Council and Runnymede and Surrey Heath Borough Council be asked to reconsider their proposed contributions for 2006/07.

08/06 **REPORT OF THE SURREY AND HAMPSHIRE CANAL SOCIETY**
[Item 8]

Noted in relation to the Campaign Rally that the Chairman had written inviting a small group from the Canal D'Orleans which is twinned with the Basingstoke Canal to visit, at their own expense, for the weekend. They had accepted and there would be a small reception for them when common issues including funding would be discussed.

Noted the report.

09/06 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS** [Item 13]

Tree Felling and Encroachment – A Member queried what action was being taken to stop residents adjacent to the canal from cutting down trees on their properties and leaving the branches beside the Canal as this would seem to constitute a fire hazard. There is also encroachment in some areas where residents are moving their fences. Anyone experiencing these difficulties should contact the Canal Director in the first instance. The Director agreed to meet the member involved on site.

Tree Survey – Noted that a tree survey had been carried out in the Surrey section and this may be continued into the Hampshire section in order to feed into a tree maintenance plan.

Bellway Homes – Noted that Bellway Homes had applied for permission to cut down a significant number of trees by the Canal. The Canal Authority has registered their dismay with the Woking Borough Council at the proposals which are for land not owned by the Canal.

Canal Watch – This scheme had been very successful and had resulted in a lot of interaction with community support officers and the police. There was a need for further work with the volunteers. The scheme would be publicised at the Canal Festival with a view to attracting more volunteers and maybe extending the scheme into Hampshire.

10/06 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS** [Item 10]

The next meeting would take place on 20 October at 10.00 am at the Canal Centre.

[Meeting Ended: 10.50 am]

Chairman