

MINUTES of the meeting of the **BASINGSTOKE CANAL JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held at 10.05 am on 26 June 2014 at Mytchett Canal Centre, Mytchett Place Road, Mytchett, Surrey, GU16 6DD.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting.

Hampshire County Council

Councillor Keith Chapman (Chairman)
Councillor John Bennison
Councillor Brian Gurden
Councillor John Wall

Surrey County Council

Mrs Linda Kemeny (a)
Mr Chris Pitt
Mr Colin Kemp (a)
Mr Ben Carasco (a)

Hampshire Districts:

Hart District Council

Councillor Simon Ambler (a)
Councillor Jonathan Glen (a)

Rushmoor Borough Council

Councillor David Welch (a)
Councillor J H Marsh

Surrey Districts:

Guildford Borough Council

Councillor Gordon Jackson

Runnymede Borough Council

Councillor J M Edwards

Surrey Heath Borough Council

Councillor Paul Ilnicki

Woking Borough Council

Councillor K M Davis

Special Interest Groups

Basingstoke Canal Society

Martin Leech
Mr P Riley

Parish Councils

Alastair Clark

Residential Boat Owners Association

Julia Jacs

Natural England

Adam Wallace

Inland Waterways Association

Gareth Jones

John Cale Canal Cruises

John Cale (a)

Martin Bowers

Basingstoke Canal Canoe Club

Liz Murnaghan

11/14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

Apologies were received from Linda Kemeny, Ben Carasco, Colin Kemp, John Cale, Adam Wallace and Jonathan Glen.

12/14 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 27 FEBRUARY 2014 [Item 2]

Declarations of interest: None

Officers: None.

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The secretary would check that all organisations had been written to in order for deputies to be nominated.
2. Cllr Elaine Still had resigned, Cllr John Wall would be her replacement.
3. It was noted that Cllr Paul Ilnicki had sent his apologies to the previous meeting.
4. The committee was waiting on a nomination from Hart DC to replace Jonathan Glen.
5. The supplementary questions referred to on page 3 of the minutes were not attached; it was requested they be circulated with the minutes for this meeting.
6. It was noted during point six of 9/14 (land at Ash Lock) that the last conversation with Hants CC was two years ago, and the subject needed to be discussed with the MoD.
7. It was suggested that all parties should sign up to the Memorandum of Agreement (5/14) and for the subject to be an agenda item at the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That

1. The minutes of the meeting on 27 February 2014 be agreed as a true record of the meeting.

Actions/further information to be provided:

1. Secretary to ensure that all organisations had been contacted with a view to naming a deputy.
2. All parties to sign up to the Memorandum of Agreement & for the subject to be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

Committee next steps: None.

13/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

None.

14/14 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

Declarations of interest: None.

Officers:

James Taylor, Senior Countryside Management Officer, Surrey County Council

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. A public question was asked about the current charges on the canal being twice that of the Thames. James Taylor would respond outside the meeting.
2. Following an incident involving a cyclist and a dog walker the speed and conduct of cyclists on the footpath was discussed. Limiting the speed was deemed unenforceable, and the grey, highways-style signs considered inappropriate on the basis some cyclists try to beat the suggested times. It was resolved that the signs would be removed and suitable alternative measures considered.
3. Mr Bowers asked about the commercial and navigation mooring fees for the canal. James Taylor replied that the commercial licences were set by the Estates Teams of both County Councils. Individual arrangements were in place with individual licence holders.

Actions/further information to be provided: None.

Committee next steps: None.

15/14 BASINGSTOKE CANAL FINANCE REPORT - FINAL ACCOUNTS 2013/2014 [Item 5]

Declarations of interest: None.

Officers:

Jane Lovett, Honorary Treasurer, Basingstoke Canal Authority

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. General reserves had increased to £304,640, which the committee felt comfortable with.
2. Recommendations 1 and 2 were both agreed. It was proposed to add the further recommendations:
 - All parties to focus on establishing income from various sources
 - Turn deficit into surplus
 - Only have a backlog on maintenance for so long.

3. Philip Riley had asked for the £50,000 that Surrey had removed from the revenue budget to be reinstated, which Cllr Chapman encouraged to take up directly with Surrey CC.
4. Houseboat income was discussed and Mr Riley reminded the meeting of the Deputy Chair's previous commitment to raise this within Surrey CC.

RESOLVED: That

1. All recommendations were agreed.

Actions/further information to be provided:

1. Mrs Kemeny to take up the issue of houseboat income with Surrey CC.

Committee next steps: None

16/14 BASINGSTOKE CANAL FINANCE REPORT - SMALL BODIES ANNUAL RETURN AND GOVERNANCE STATEMENT [Item 6]

Declarations of interest: None.

Officers:

Jane Lovett, Honorary Treasurer, Basingstoke Canal Authority

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Basingstoke Canal is required to submit an annual return by 30 June 2014 summarising its financial activities for the past financial year broken down into the Accounting Statements, the Annual Governance Statement, the external auditor's certificate and opinion and the internal auditor's report.
2. Due to a printing error, Appendix A appeared on page 31 instead of page 23, and Appendix C appeared on page 29 instead of page 26.

RESOLVED: That

1. All recommendations were agreed.

Actions/further information to be provided: None.

Committee next steps: None.

17/14 CANAL REDEVELOPMENT UPDATE [Item 7]

Declarations of interest: None.

Officers:

Lisa Creaye-Griffin, Countryside Group Manager, Surrey County Council

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. Possible uses for the site that were financially sustainable and didn't impinge the nature of the location were being discussed outside the meeting, with a more in-depth update to be tabled at the next board.
2. Short stay accommodation and an interactive attraction were being considered. Open days with paper based activities was also suggested as a money-making possibility, along with encouraging donations, bequests, and selling a notional stake in the canal to members of the public.

RESOLVED: That

1. The verbal update be noted.
2. Officers to come back with further information at the October meeting

Actions/further information to be provided:

Officers to provide an update report for the meeting in June 2014.

Committee next steps:

The Committee to consider the update report at its next meeting in June 2014.

18/14 BASINGSTOKE CANAL SIGNAGE GUIDELINES [Item 8]

Declarations of interest: None.

Officers:

Fiona Shipp, Canal Manager, Basingstoke Canal Authority

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The lack of boat accompanying the figures on the opening page was commented upon, although it was explained that the design had been agreed by the Board and a boat had been incorporated into the background.
2. All Members were in agreement that the document sent out the right message, and the colour, script, message and artwork of the document were all impressive.

RESOLVED: That

1. The report be noted.

Actions/further information to be provided:

None.

Committee next steps:

None.

19/14 CANAL MANAGER'S REPORT [Item 9]

Declarations of interest: None.

Officers:

Fiona Shipp, Canal Manager, Basingstoke Canal Authority

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. Work on the moorings was currently three months behind.
2. Staffing changes were taking effect. The departing Phil Allen was thanked for his hard work on the canal.
3. The rollout of the new licence fee was in its second stage covering April to March. Some fees were available online.
4. A full tree survey would be starting on 14 July.
5. A blue/green algal bloom had recently affected the canal in parts of Hampshire due to the run off after winter. No further reports had been received but this would be closely monitored.
6. Following a botanical survey the canal SSSI had moved from unfavourable position to unfavourable recovery, which was considered good news. The current boat limit of 1,500 per year was expected to increase should the SSSI levels continue to improve.
7. Work would begin on the car park charges in Reading Road, Fleet, in July. This was not expected to generate a significant profit over the next year due to installation charges.
8. Work to fix the winter's landslip was on track to be completed for the start of the boating season next year. A design to resolve the slip had almost been finalised, planning permission had been requested and an ecological survey would be required. Cllr Chapman was determined for the work to be completed; where the funds would come from would be agreed at a later time. There would be restrictions on boats during the works, as soon as dates were confirmed they would be widely circulated.
9. The possibility of utilising charity funding via the Inland Waterways Association channels to acquire another weedcutter was discussed.
10. The Chairman thanked the Canal Manager and the Canal Centre staff for the report and their hard work throughout the winter months.

RESOLVED: That

1. The report be noted.

Actions/further information to be provided:

1. Gareth Jones to put Fiona Shipp in touch with the appropriate person to obtain a weedcutter through charitable funding.

Committee next steps: None.

20/14 CANAL SOCIETY REPORT [Item 10]

Declarations of interest: None.

Officers:

Philip Riley, Basingstoke Canal Society
Martin Leech, Basingstoke Canal Society

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The BCA's weedcutter had been used for approximately 40 hours on the canal, equating to some £5,000.
2. The John Pinkerton 11 had been a great ambassador for the canal, but would be leaving in early August. Mr Riley offered all members the opportunity for a trip on the boat prior to its departure. There was a high level of interest, and Mr Riley would arrange the visit outside the meeting.
3. The lack of a joined up policy on planning and the need for an officer to look into planning reports and provide advice on how to overcome obstacles.
4. It was agreed that the Magna Carta anniversary would provide a great opportunity for the Canal, with lots planned throughout both counties and the canal providing a link between Odiham and Runnymede. It was suggested that all councillors engage with the Authorities in order to make the most of the opportunity.
5. The opportunity to build visitor centres was encouraged, although the projected needed impetus and additional resources. Mr Riley would come up with a more definitive programme.

Actions/further information to be provided:

1. Mr Riley to organise a trip for interested parties on the John Pinkerton 11.

Committee next steps: None.

21/14 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 11]

The Committee noted that the next meeting would take place on Thursday 16 October 2014 at the Mytchett Canal Centre.

Cllr Chapman thanked colleagues for their attendance.

Meeting ended at: 11.30 am

Chairman