

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the **BASINGSTOKE CANAL JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held at Mytchett Canal Centre, Mytchett Place Road, Mytchett, Surrey, GU16 6DD on Thursday, 29 October 2015 at 10.05 am

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

(\*present)

**Hampshire County Council**

- \* Councillor Keith Chapman
- \* Councillor John Bennison
- Councillor Brian Gurden
- \* Councillor John Wall

**Hampshire Districts:**

**Hart District Council**

- \* Councillor Simon Ambler
- \* Councillor Stephen Gorys

**Rushmoor Borough Council**

- \* Councillor Les Taylor
- \* Councillor JH Marsh

**Special Interest Groups**

**Basingstoke Canal Society**

- \* Martin Leech
- \* Mr Philip Riley

**Hart District Association of Parish and Town Councils**

- \* Alastair Clark

**Residential Boat Owners Association**

- \* Julia Jacs

**Surrey County Council**

- \* Councillor Mike Goodman
- \* Councillor Ben Carasco
- \* Councillor Chris Pitt
- \* Councillor Colin Kemp

**Surrey Districts:**

**Guildford Borough Council**

- \* Councillor Nigel Kearse

**Runnymede Borough Council**

- \* Councillor Barry Pitt

**Surrey Heath Borough Council**

- \* Councillor David Lewis

**Woking Borough Council**

- \* Councillor Kevin Davis

**Natural England**

- \* Adam Wallace

**Inland Waterways Association**

- \* Gareth Jones

**Basingstoke Canal Boating Club**

- \* Liz Murnaghan

**15/15 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN [Item 1]**

Cllr Mike Goodman was elected as the new Chairman of the JMC. Cllr Keith Chapman was elected as the Vice Chairman.

The JMC recorded its thanks to Linda Kemeny for her work over the past four years as Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

**16/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 2]**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Brian Gurden.

It was explained that Cllr Ben Carasco would be arriving at the meeting later.

**17/15 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 25 JUNE 2015 [Item 3]**

These were agreed as a true record of the previous meeting.

**18/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 4]**

There were none.

**19/15 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 5]**

There were none.

**20/15 BASINGSTOKE CANAL AUTHORITY RISK REGISTER [Item 6]**

**Declarations of Interest:** None

**Officers:**

James Taylor, Strategic Manager for the Basingstoke Canal  
Fiona Shipp, Basingstoke Canal Manager

**Key Points raised in the discussion:**

1. The Chairman stated that the highest risks on the risk register were funding for the canal, failures of large engineering structures on the canal and adequately managing partnerships in relation to the canal.
2. A member of the committee stated that the Canal and River Trust had done well from becoming a charity. This change had opened up more funding opportunities. It was suggested that reviewing the governance model around the JMC could possibly allow for more funding opportunities.

**Actions/further information to be provided:** None

**Committee next steps:** None

**21/15 BASINGSTOKE CANAL SOCIETY REPORT [Item 7]**

**Declarations of Interest:** None

**Witnesses:**

Martin Leech, Basingstoke Canal Society  
Phil Riley, Basingstoke Canal Society

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Chairman thanked the Canal Society for producing the report. The Canal Society explained that they would be celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year. A joint event would be taking place with the Historic Narrowboats Club in Woking.
2. Dredging was highlighted as a key concern for the Canal Society. It was felt that certain parts of the canal required immediate dredging – with the case of Swan “cutting” at North Warnborough being a particular concern. If this did not happen fairly soon, certain parts of the canal would close. This would in turn have a negative impact on businesses that run along the canal including the John Pinkerton boat trips.
3. The Canal Society asked for Surrey and Hampshire County Councils to view dredging as a priority. Officers stated that the dredging of the canal was not a quick fix, and that the issues at Swan “cutting” were wider and not confined to simply dredging the channel. Consultation needed to take place with landowners before work could begin. Funding required for dredging was also a key concern. It was suggested that consideration should be given to funding the work from the Canal Authority’s reserve funds, as this was a critical issue. The Canal Society’s 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations would it was suggested be an opportunity to launch an appeal to raise funds for dredging.
4. It was agreed that Gareth Jones and Philip Riley would meet with the Strategic Manager and Head of Countryside for Hampshire County Council as a “Dredging Task Group” to discuss dredging and particularly issues at Swan “cutting”, North Warnborough.

**Actions/further information to be provided:**

- It was agreed that the Strategic Manager for the Basingstoke Canal would bring back a report on dredging to the next JMC meeting, following the meeting of the Task Group highlighting the issues and possible options for dredging, as well as proposed timescales and legal issues.

**Actioned by:** James Taylor

**Committee next steps:** None

**22/15 CANAL MANAGEMENT REPORT [Item 8]**

**Declarations of Interest:** None

**Officers:**

James Taylor, Strategic Manager for the Basingstoke Canal

Fiona Shipp, Basingstoke Canal Manager

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Canal Manager introduced the report by informing the committee that theft had been an issue within the last few months. Three vehicles had been broken into and the equipment in them taken.
2. It was stated that there had been several leaks in the canal especially in the Woking area. The JMC were informed that the emergency services had dealt with these within a matter of hours.
3. The Canal Manager stated that work was being done to find the source of the pollution affecting the Canal.

**Actions/further information to be provided:** None

**Committee next steps:** None

## **23/15 CAPITAL WORKS PROGRESS REPORT [Item 9]**

**Declarations of Interest:** None

**Officers:**

James Taylor, Strategic Manager for the Basingstoke Canal

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Strategic Manager for Basingstoke Canal introduced the report by suggesting that Hampshire's capital work had been dominated by an unexpected landslip at Dogsmersfield which had a serious impact on the budget. Remedial work had been delayed by the need for adjacent landowners to complete preparatory work, and was now expected to begin in December 2015 or January 2016. A member asked how far behind schedule the work was. It was estimated that the work will take eight to ten weeks to be completed.
2. Members were informed that no Capital Investments had been planned for after March 2017. It was therefore suggested that further preparation should be undertaken to take into account any possible unplanned issues.
3. It was stated that the largest allocated sums remaining in both budgets related to dredging as the outstanding work still needed to be completed.
4. The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, thanked all officers involved in supporting the Canal.

**Actions/further information to be provided:** None

**Committee next steps:** None

## **24/15 MYTCHETT CANAL CENTRE ORAL UPDATE REPORT [Item 10]**

**Declarations of Interest:** None

**Officers:**

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

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The report was introduced by the Countryside Group Manager who explained the redevelopment of the Canal Centre site. This was said to be costing around £4.6 million. It was stated that the tourist attractions would be an additional cost. The service would work up a project plan and the planning application for the redevelopment before consulting with neighbours. A report on where the service was with the project plan would be bought back to the JMC in February 2016. The main aim of the redevelopment of the Canal Site was to improve visitor attractions and create a high income for the centre. The proposed development of the campsite to improve capacity and facilities would be particularly important for income generation due to the lack of campsites in the area.
2. Committee members expressed their views on the potential plan for the redeveloped of the centre which had not yet been distributed to wider groups, and the importance of carrying out a thorough consultation process was stressed.
3. A member of the JMC asked where the funding for the redevelopment would come from. The Chairman stated that bids would be made to the LEPS (M3 LEP). It was stated that the JMC had currently paid around £100,000 into the design work of the redevelopment.
4. A member of the JMC suggested that a consultation with local residents regarding the redevelopment is essential as there is a local retirement village is close to the canal which has 43 private properties. All neighbours should be consulted.

**Resolved:**

1. The Committee agreed that an update report regarding the redevelopment of the Basingstoke Canal Centre Site would be bought back to the next committee meeting in February.

Actions/further information to be provided: None

Committee next steps: None

**25/15 FINANCE REPORT [Item 11]**

**Declarations of Interest:** None

**Officers:** Jane Lovett, Honorary Treasurer, Hampshire County Council

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Honorary Treasurer introduced the report by briefing Members on the financial position of the Basingstoke Canal Authority. The budget out-turn forecast did not currently include a contribution from Fleet Town Council, as a decision had not yet been taken by the Council.
2. It was stated that the outturn forecast showed the Canal would draw £39,996 from the reserve during 2015/2016 which was said to be £33,004 less than budgeted.
3. It was noted that income from the houseboats along the canal was being put back into the Surrey County Council central fund rather than being passed to the Basingstoke Canal Authority. The Countryside Group Manager explained

that this was due to the Council's current property management policy. It was noted that any changes to this policy had to be agreed by Cabinet. A report would be submitted to the Cabinet in January 2015 requesting that all income from houseboats should be retained by the Canal Authority.

4. The Committee noted with regret that despite the significant amenity value of the Canal in their areas, Runnymede and Surrey Heath Borough Councils were not making their full financial contribution to the Canal Authority.

**Actions/further information to be provided:**

- The Chairman agreed to write to the Chief Executives of Runnymede and Surrey Heath Borough Councils requesting that they make their full financial contributions to the Canal Authority in accordance with the funding formula. He would also request that the Leader of Surrey County Council raise the matter with his counterparts at the two authorities.

**Action by:** Mike Goodman and Lucy Collier

**Committee next steps:**

The response from Runnymede and Surrey Heath Borough Councils to be reported back at the next meeting.

**26/15 REPORT ON THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE JMC [Item 12]**

**Declarations of Interest:** None

**Officers:**

Bryan Searle, Senior Manager (Cabinet, Committees & Appeals) Surrey County Council

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Committee considered the request from Fleet Town Council to become a full voting member of the JMC. Some Members expressed the view that Fleet Town Council deserved voting rights on the grounds that the Council contributed a significant amount to Basingstoke Canal Authority, however others felt that allowing Fleet full voting rights would not be correct as it would encourage other Local Authorities which contributed financially to make the same claim.
2. The view was also expressed that as Hart District Council was only directly paying half of the contribution due under the funding formula, it should give up one of its seats to make the process fair. This would also ensure that the balance of voting members between Hampshire and Surrey would be maintained if Fleet Town Council was elected as a full voting Member. However, it was also noted that other councils had retained voting rights on the JMC despite not contributing financially for several years.
3. The Committee was asked to vote on the request from Fleet Town Council and it was

**Resolved** (by 9 votes for to 4):

(a) That Fleet Town Council be appointed as a full voting member of the Basingstoke Canal Joint Management Committee.

**Action by:** Lucy Collier

(b) That an additional voting place be initially offered to Woking Borough Council in order to maintain a balance in the number of Hampshire and Surrey Members.

**Action by:** Lucy Collier

(c) That the eight Hampshire and Surrey Councils with existing voting rights formally agree an amendment to the Memorandum of Agreement to reflect the change to the number of voting representatives on the JMC.

**Action by:** Lucy Collier

#### **Appointment of a Special Interest Group Representative**

4. The Chairman invited the three groups which had applied to fill the Special Interest Group vacancy (Accessible Boating, Galleon Marine Boatyard Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) and the Ramblers' Association) to speak for two minutes in support of their application. Following a vote it was,

**Resolved:** That Galleon Marine LLP be appointed to fill the Special Interest Group vacancy on the Joint Management Committee.

Action by: Lucy Collier

5. It was agreed that the two groups which didn't get selected would be welcome to attend future meetings of the Committee and contribute to discussions at the invitation of the Chairman.

**Actions/further information to be provided:** None

**Committee next steps:** The Committee to receive an update on membership at its next meeting.

#### **27/15 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 13]**

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 25 February 2016, 10am, Mytchett Canal Centre.

Meeting ended at: 11.40am

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**Chairman**