

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the **BASINGSTOKE CANAL JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held at Mytchett Canal Centre, Mytchett Place Road, Mytchett, Surrey, GU16 6DD on Wednesday 2 November 2016  
These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting Thursday 29 June 2017.

**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

**Parish Councils**

- \* Alastair Clark

**Residential Boat Owners Association**

- \* Mike Pritchard

**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

**Galleon Marine**

Arthur McCaffery

**Substitutes:**

**Members in attendance:**

**11/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]**

Apologies were received from Arthur McCaffery and Gareth Jones.

Verna Smith acted as a substitute Member for Gareth Jones.

**12/16 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 30 JUNE 2016 AND 29 OCTOBER 2015 [Item 2]**

The minutes of the previous meetings were approved as true and accurate records of the previous two meetings of the committee.

**13/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]**

There were no declarations of interest made.

#### **14/16 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]**

There were no questions or petitions received.

#### **15/16 OUTTURN FORECAST 2016/17 AND FORWARD BUDGET 2017/18 [Item 5]**

##### **Officers:**

Jane Lovett, Honourary Treasurer, Hampshire County Council.  
James Taylor, Strategic Manager, Basingstoke Canal Authority

##### **Declarations of interest:**

None

##### **Key points of the discussion:**

1. Officers highlighted that the financial situation for 2016/17 was predicted to be better than budgeted, highlighting that the Basingstoke Canal Authority (BCA) had contributed £3,230 into its reserves rather than the £10,000 draw included in the budget mainly as a result of increased income. It was highlighted that the BCA had performed financially well over the last financial year so far.
2. Officers pointed out that the 2017/18 draft budget BCA was aiming to create a robust future budget for the upcoming financial year, with a primary focus on creating a balanced budget sheet. This was highlighted as the key priority for the BCA to mitigate unforeseen future risks. It was noted that the BCA had a positive outlook for the next financial year.
3. Officers pointed out that canal maintenance funding was lower than was calculated in the maintenance plan. This had the potential to cause issues, however maintaining a balanced budget was the key concern for the BCA at the present juncture. Members questioned whether the reduced maintenance budget would have a significant long term negative impact upon the canal. The Strategic Manager of the Basingstoke Canal highlighted that this would be a risk if the maintenance budget was low over a sustained period. The Honorary Treasurer made the point that there was one-off expenditure of £50,000 in the 2017/18 budget so therefore this was not necessarily an on-going position
4. The Chairman of the Committee noted that implications of the future governance model of the BCA would have unforeseen on the future budget situation. It was noted that these changes would have an unknown impact until details of the prospective changes had emerged.
5. Officers noted that the primary expenditure for the BCA Capital Works projects were the Dogmersfield landslip and Barley Mow development

in Hampshire.

6. Members commented that the increased revenue from income generation, particularly sales income, was a positive development for the BCA. It was noted that the fees and charges policy had been updated to be more robust going forward into 2017/18 and that and the recommendations in relation to charging for essential carers were accepted by Members.
7. Members had questions regarding the financial implications on the budget going forward regarding the lower financial contributions from Surrey Heath and Runnymede Borough Councils and whether this could be rectified. It was also questioned whether the Memorandum of Agreement could be amended to link voting rights on the committee and budget contributions.
8. Members questioned whether there was sufficient funding for adequate dredging works in future. Officers responded that the BCA was waiting for a response from surveyors in order to commence with works, but that there was funding available going forward for some key dredging works.
9. Members raised a question about the Rive Ditch (Woking) Culvert project, requesting information as to whether the project increased flooding risks. Officers highlighted that the replacement culvert was of smaller cross section than the original at the request of SCC and Woking Borough Council drainage officers; this was in order that no additional flood waters were passed down stream. Members questioned whether this still presented a significant risk and requested that consultation occurred with drainage officers in Surrey County Council's Environment and Infrastructure directorate.
10. The Committee noted that the finance report was a useful tool for indicating the current and future financial position of the BCA and thanked the Honourary Treasurer for her work.

### **Actions**

1. That the committee agreed the outturn forecast for the current year 2016/17; and
2. Agreed the budget for 2017/18

## **16/16 CANAL MANAGEMENT REPORT [Item 6]**

### **Officers:**

James Taylor, Strategic Manager, Basingstoke Canal

Fiona Shipp, Canal Manager

Lisa Creaye-Griffin, Countryside Group Manager

### **Declarations of interest:**

None

### **Key points of the discussion:**

1. Officers highlighted that there were several key winter projects for the BCA, highlighting the inception of the five year rolling programme of foliage reduction was being conducted as a key priority.
2. Officers informed Members that the BCA had undertaken its routine tree surgery and that a three year tree inspection was due in 2017.
3. Officers noted that there were a high number of insurance claims regarding boats on the canal damaging lock gates. It was noted that this was unusual, but that the BCA had no causal link available as to why this was the case.
4. Officers highlighted that capital improvement works and seepage prevention at Ash Embankment which had been successful.
5. Officers highlighted that depth surveys had been undertaken across the waterway and that the results were expected imminently.
6. It was also noted work was being undertaken to assess Swan "Cutting." Members queried whether work was being undertaken with the Basingstoke Canal Society (BCS) and whether officers were planning to organise a meeting with the BCS regarding this issue. Officers responded affirmatively stating that they would work closely with the BCS to outline options regarding Swan "Cutting," before the next meeting of the Joint Management Committee. It was pointed out that options for redevelopment would be likely to exceed £350,000, however, it was noted that work would be a long term solution.
7. It was also noted that work on Wilks Water Culvert had been indefinitely paused due to an underestimation of costs by contractors.
8. It was noted that the Dogmersfield landslip work would result in a 20 week closure of the waterway between December 2016 and April 2017. Officers noted that this was a tight time schedule.
9. Officers highlighted the closure of the Barley Mow car park as a result of anti-social behaviour. Officers stressed that the BCA apologised if

this had caused disruption to local residents, however, it was highlighted that all other possible options had been looked into and the temporary closure method was taken as a last resort to prevent risk to public and personnel.

10. It was noted that the Deepcut locks were closed for two weeks in September 2016 as a result of low water levels.
11. It was highlighted by Members that there were some Japanese Knotweed issues of significance at Deepcut Barracks site adjacent to the Canal property, where soil removal was proposed., Officers pointed out that this was not an option on the Canal and treatment of Knotweed with the stem injection of herbicide was the only effective method available, but that it took a significant amount of time to take full effect.

#### **Actions/Further information to be provided**

1. That options regarding Swan “Cutting” be further explored by Hampshire County Council officers and BCS.

#### **17/16 CANAL OPERATIONAL PLAN [Item 7]**

##### **Officers:**

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

##### **Declarations of interest:**

None

##### **Key points of the discussion:**

1. Officers highlighted the three functions of the plan – as a work programme, repository for operational procedures, and the method of calculating the Key Results Indicators to be reported to this committee. Members questioned why the operational procedures all related to navigation when the vast majority of visitors were on foot or cycle. Officers noted that policies and procedures were only adopted as and when the need arose, it was also noted that HCC and SCC policies were already available for non-waterway specific management.
2. Officers noted that the mechanism for calculating the Key Results Indicators (KRI) from a range of individual Key Performance Indicators (KPI) was contained in the plan. The KRIs would be presented and reviewed at the next meeting of the committee, based on achievement for 2016/17.
3. Officers highlighted that the BCA had set its own realistic, but challenging, targets for the first year. Members questioned the

robustness of self-setting targets. It was highlighted that this was an initial pilot and that the committee were welcomed to challenge targets as part of their review at the next meeting of the committee.

**Resolved:**

1. The Committee approved the adoption of the Operational Plan.

**Actions/ Further information to be provided**

1. The Committee requested that a review of the progress of the BCA based on its KRIs be brought to the committee at its next regular meeting

**18/16 BASINGSTOKE CANAL AUTHORITY RISK ASSESSMENTS [Item 8]**

**Officers:**

James Taylor, Strategic Manager, Basingstoke Canal

Fiona Shipp, Canal Manager

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

Jo Heath, Head of Countryside, Hampshire County Council

**Declarations of interest:**

None

**Key points of the discussion:**

1. Officers explained the risk register to Members, noting the key risk to funding as part of the comprehensive spending review. This was highlighted as a primary risk to the service, while also noting several other increasing risks to the service.
2. Members questioned the implications of the risk regarding the delay to site redevelopment, and requested that BCA begin work on implementing plans regarding redevelopment to mitigate this. The Head of Countryside, Surrey County Council, highlighted that site redevelopment discussions were in progress, however, that the possible changes in governance arrangements had delayed the process due to uncertainty regarding future arrangements. The Chairman noted that additional funding and investments during the possible change in governance arrangements would be a significant challenge to achieve.

**Resolved:**

1. The Committee noted the risks in the plan and the works underway within the BCA and local authorities to mitigate these.

**19/16 BASINGSTOKE CANAL SOCIETY REPORT [Item 9]**

**Witnesses:**

Philip Riley, Chairman of the Basingstoke Canal Society

Martin Leech, Vice Chairman of the Basingstoke Canal Society

James Taylor, Strategic Manager, Basingstoke Canal

**Declarations of interest:**

None

**Key points of the discussion:**

1. The Chairman of the BCS noted the positive reception of the work undertaken by the BCS during the period June 2016 to November 2016, highlighting the refurbishment of the Woking disposal facility and the Woking Canal Festival, as positive events for residents.
2. The Chairman of the BCS noted that there was a potential issue regarding vegetation with the bank between the towpath and canal. It was noted that the BCS wished to ensure that the vegetation was kept at an acceptable level for residents to see the canal sufficiently. It was noted that the BCS approved of the work undertaken by the BCA with regard to this.
3. Members questioned whether riparian land owners had responsibility to provide funding to the BCA in response to works undertaken that could disrupt the canal function. Officers noted that there was in place the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), but that funding from this would go to the local planning authority. While it was the case in some authorities that this funding would be transferred to the BCA, this was not the case in all. Members questioned whether the Committee Members could query this with their respective local authorities to amend this policy, highlighting the idea of creating a “corridor” of riparian land owners around the canal which would be liable to provide CIL funding to the BCA.

**Recommendations**

None

**20/16 ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 10]**

The Committee noted and approved the Recommendations and Actions Tracker and Forward Work Programme.

The Committee also thanked the departing Vice Chairman, Cllr Keith Chapman, for the work he has undertaken on the Committee.

**21/16 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 11]**

The next public meeting of the Committee will be held on 29 June 2017 at the Mytchett Canal Centre.

Meeting ended at: 11.55 am

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**Chairman**