

MINUTES of the meeting of the **BASINGSTOKE CANAL JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held at Mytchett Canal Centre, Mytchett Place Road, Mytchett, Surrey, GU16 6DD on 26 June 2019.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting 21 November 2019.

(* = Present)

Hampshire County Council

*Councillor Rod Cooper
*Councillor Jonathan Glen
Councillor Anna McNair Scott
Councillor Charles Choudhary

Surrey County Council

*Councillor Mike Goodman
Councillor Ben Carasco
*Councillor Paul Deach
*Councillor Saj Hussain

Hart District Council

*Councillor Simon Ambler
*Councillor Wendy Makepeace-Browne

Rushmoor Borough Council

*Councillor John Marsh
*Councillor Veronica Graham-Green

Fleet Town Council

Councillor Peter Wildsmith

Guildford Borough Council

Vacancy

Runnymede Borough Council

*Councillor Brian Clarke

Surrey Heath Borough Council

Councillor David Lewis

Woking Borough Council

*Councillor Kevin Davis
Councillor Rob Leach

Special Interest Groups

Basingstoke Canal Society

*Mr Martin Leech
*Mr Philip Riley

Parish Councils

*Mr Alastair Clark

National Trust,

River Wey and Godalming Navigations

Mr John Gibson

Natural England

Mr Adam Bates

Inland Waterways Association

Mr Gareth Jones

Basingstoke Canal Boating Club

*Mrs Liz Murnaghan

Galleon Marine

*Mr Arthur McCaffery

Substitutes:

*Councillor Sarah Croke (Surrey Heath).
*Ms Verna Smith (Inland Waterways Association).

2518 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 118]

Apologies were received from Charles Choudhary (Hampshire County Council), Adam Bates (Natural England), Anna McNair Scott (Hampshire County Council), Peter Wildsmith (Fleet Town Council) and John Gibson (National Trust, River Wey and Godalming Navigations).

Sarah Croke substituted for David Lewis (Surrey Heath Borough Council).
Verna Smith substituted for and replaced Gareth Jones (Inland Waterways Association).

2618 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 22 NOVEMBER 2018 [Item 218]

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed.

2718 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 318]

There were none.

2818 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 418]

There were no questions or petitions received.

2918 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTIONS TRACKER [Item 518]

Witnesses:

Lisa Creaye-Griffin, Countryside Group Manager, Surrey County Council (SCC)

James Taylor, Strategic Manager - Basingstoke Canal (SCC/HCC)

Jo Heath, Head of Countryside - Hampshire County Council (HCC)

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. Members noted the three actions in progress and expressed concern over action A1/18 on Final Accounts 2017/18, that Surrey County Council's decision on the status of houseboat income and its allocation to the Basingstoke Canal Authority had been delayed since November 2018. The Countryside Group Manager (SCC) will go back to the Property Services department at Surrey County Council for a written reply on their corporate landlord process. The Vice-Chairman of the Committee, also the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste (SCC) will also contact Property Services and a Member of this Committee (SCC) will refer this to the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee.
2. Members expressed disappointment that some committee members had not attended the meeting and that in line with the Committee's Memorandum Of Agreement and Terms of Reference, they were permitted to send a deputy/substitute in their place.
3. The Basingstoke Canal Society representatives asked Officers to clarify the car parking charges within the Final Accounts 2016/17 item A7/17 on the Actions Tracker. The Strategic Manager stated that this required a feasibility study but this could not be resourced at present. The Head of Countryside (HCC) noted that similar work was being carried out in Hampshire and that it could be combined to move this forward more quickly so that it is not delayed past 2020.
4. Officers from Surrey and Hampshire County Councils were happy to collaborate on a "wish list" for future projects together and to also take into consideration any overlap with Basingstoke Canal Society projects to help form an Investment Strategy, as part of the Forward Work Programme.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

1. A7/17: The Strategic Manager will work with the Head of Countryside - Hampshire County Council on this Final Accounts 2016/17 Action concerning car parking charges.
2. A1/18: The Countryside Group Manager (SCC) will go back to the Property Services department at Surrey County Council for a written reply on their corporate landlord process. The Vice-Chairman of this Committee, also the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste (SCC) will contact Property Services and a Member of this Committee (SCC) will refer this to the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee.
3. A1/19: That the Committee's Memorandum Of Agreement and Terms of Reference will be circulated to all Members and special interest group representatives.
4. A2/19: Officers from Surrey and Hampshire County Councils will collaborate on a "wish list" for future projects as part of the Investment Strategy in the Forward Work Programme and consider the overlap with Basingstoke Canal Society projects.

RESOLVED:

The Committee agreed the updates to the actions tracker.

3018 FINANCE REPORT: FINAL ACCOUNTS OUTTURN 2018/19 [Item 618]

Witnesses:

Jane Lovett, Honorary Treasurer
James Taylor, Strategic Manager- Basingstoke Canal (SCC/HCC)

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Honorary Treasurer introduced the Final Accounts 2018/19. It was reported that the Basingstoke Canal Authority was currently in a sound financial position. At the end of the year the Canal made a contribution to reserves of £105,180 compared to the drawdown of £6,000 predicted in September. However, an overspend of £145,000 would have resulted if planned maintenance works had not slipped into 2019/20. The Honorary Treasurer stated that this showed the tight nature of the revenue budget as there was not "spare" budget to cover unplanned urgent Canal maintenance works.
2. The Honorary Treasurer addressed the Chairman's query on the underspend against the profiled spend of both Hampshire and Surrey County Councils' capital expenditure programmes. It was reported by the Honorary Treasurer that the lower spend was attributable to a combination of factors: availability of relevant staff resource, the

permissions and consents required from third parties and adjoining neighbours and difficulties in appointing appropriate contractors.

3. The Honorary Treasurer stressed that it was important that both County Councils understood that the underspend reflects the allocation of capital resource as opposed to the payments profile and that once the contractors are on site, the expenditure would increase dramatically above the annual allocation and that both Counties still have a capital works backlog.
4. Members asked about the slipped expenditure for Deepcut Depot, and officers noted that the lease had not been re-secured. Officers noted that SCC Estates and Ministry of Defence were working on this.
5. Members questioned Surrey Heath Borough Council's shortfall against the funding formula. It was reported that although Guildford, Surrey Heath and Runnymede Borough Councils' had signed up to the Memorandum of Agreement, it was minuted in previous Joint Management Committees that they had not agreed to the funding formula. It was reported that the grant structure at Surrey Heath Borough Council had recently changed so a re-assessment would be undertaken to continue the funding given to the BCA. The Committee agreed that an invitation would be sent to the new Leader of the Council to invite him to the Canal Centre.
6. Members raised the possibility of forming a task group to update the Memorandum of Agreement (2014), however, the Vice-Chairman and Honorary Treasurer noted caution over revisiting the terms of the Memorandum of Agreement.
7. The Honorary Treasurer summarised the funding formula for the Partners, with half of the cost sharing funded by Hampshire and Surrey County Councils and the district and borough councils sharing the other half based upon their population and mileage of the canal in their areas. She recommended that the formula should not be changed due to the current difficult financial position of councils.
8. Members informed the Committee that the Basingstoke Canal Authority can receive funding and support through lotteries and schemes, where those in Rushmoor Borough Council, Surrey Heath Borough Council and Surrey County Council were mentioned.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

1. A3/19: The Committee agreed that an invitation to the Canal Centre would be sent to the new leader of Surrey Heath Borough Council.
2. A4/19: Members (Councillors) to go back to relevant councils to discuss lotteries and funding schemes.

RESOLVED:

1. The Committee reviewed and agreed the outturn position for the year 2018/19.
2. The Committee noted the effect of the slipped expenditure on the Unallocated Reserves.

3118 CANAL MANAGEMENT REPORT [Item 718]

Wendy Makepeace-Browne (Hart District Council) arrived at 10:45am.

Witnesses:

Fiona Shipp, Canal Manager- Basingstoke Canal Authority (BCA)
James Taylor, Strategic Manager- Basingstoke Canal (SCC/HCC)

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Canal Manager (BCA) provided a summary of the completed planned maintenance and length inspection works which included lock gate replacement and winter flail towpath cutting. It was explained that there was an increase in visitor numbers to various events on the Canal and a greater social media following.
2. The Canal Manager (BCA) also stated that there was a fully volunteer crewed Patrol Boat which checked people's licences particularly unpowered boats and issued licences as an extra source of revenue. A new smaller patrol boat donated to the Basingstoke Canal Authority and Basingstoke Canal Society by the Boys Brigade, would now be used as a second patrol boat in Odiham.
3. The Canal Manager (BCA) praised the support from volunteers which equated to 23,982 work hours last year. Two volunteer-led work boats cleared rubbish and Floating Pennywort and a regular weekly group of 30 volunteers carried out minor maintenance and vegetation clearance. Special recognition of volunteers was noted including Mike Gordon the Head Lengthsman and crew manager for *Rosebud*, was awarded the Chairman's Award. Ken Sankey of the BCS was a runner up of the Volunteer of the Year Award and Steve Livsey-Bennett the Canal Ranger BCA was awarded runner up of the Volunteer Leader Award.
4. As part of the Capital Works programme 2018, the Strategic Manager remarked that contractors had been working on a prioritised system of bank protection throughout the Canal and lock repairs in Surrey. To save money the same contractor was used throughout. It was also reported that Woking Town wharf had been completed and had been officially opened at the end of May. In Hampshire, the complex issue of Swan "cutting" was being addressed by Hampshire County Council engineers who contacted residents for greater access along this narrow area to carry out further monitoring works. Work was postponed until late 2019/2020 at Crookham Deeps to re-line a

section of the canal bed due to planning permission being required for a silt drying lagoon.

5. The Strategic Manager asked the Committee to approve the Campsite Business Plan with revised figures since November 2017, this followed a more detailed plan from the architects and was included in the Supplementary Agenda. The Campsite Business Plan included an increased draw on reserves of approximately £57,000, calculated from the revised BCA match funding draw of reserves of £141,029 minus the original £84,000 costing. The non-matched grant draw on reserves of £35,000 was also included in the plan as a specific item covering preparation work which could not be claimed for. The Strategic Manager and Honorary Treasurer noted that the BCA's portion of the investment would be paid back in under four years.
6. The Strategic Manager informed the Committee of the joint collaboration with Woking Borough Council and Surrey County Council project on Chobham Road turnover bridge funded by EM3. The planning application was recently granted by Woking Borough Council scheduled to commence this winter, the bridge would avoid pedestrians and cyclists needing to negotiate the traffic in Woking town centre.
7. The Committee expressed disappointment that the Basingstoke Canal Authority did not achieve the Water Environment Grant (WEG) from Natural England of £250,000 to aid tree thinning and invasive species removal policies. The Committee sought to ask the representative from Natural England at this meeting to provide an explanation but no one was present. The Strategic Manager had received a verbal update from Natural England before the Committee, which was that the second point's threshold had not been met, however the promised detailed written explanation had not been provided. Officers agreed upon further communication with Natural England, for a detailed explanation.
8. Members were very concerned with the inconsistency of Natural England's view that the Canal is a nationally important habitat, which restricted the ability to do certain income generating operations, whilst not provide funding to compensate for this. The Vice-Chairman of the Committee would contact Rt Hon. Michael Gove the Member of Parliament for Surrey Heath and Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on the matter.
9. The Strategic Manager explained that abstraction licensing had changed in 2018 by the Environment Agency (EA), which had highlighted inconsistencies over the licences required for the Canal. Legal Counsel had been consulted and concluded that the EA were incorrect in not recognising the County Councils as navigation authorities, not permitting them access to the concessions available. The EA on reviewing Counsel's opinion had reversed their previous stance. Two volunteers from the Basingstoke Canal Society Martin

Leech and John How, were thanked for their role in helping the Strategic Manager with this issue.

10. Officers reported that the Basingstoke Canal Authority's Conservation Management Plan was approved by Natural England and had been adopted for the next ten years.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

1. A5/19: The Committee agreed upon further communication with Natural England on the issue of not receiving the Water Environment Grant (WEG).
The Vice-Chairman of the Committee would contact Michael Gove the Member of Parliament for Surrey Heath and Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on the matter of funding.

RESOLVED:

1. The Committee noted the report.
2. The Committee approved the Campsite Business Plan which showed the revised figures of increased funding required by the Basingstoke Canal Authority of approximately £57,000.

3218 BASINGSTOKE CANAL SOCIETY REPORT [Item 818]

Witnesses:

Philip Riley, Basingstoke Canal Society- Chairman
Martin Leech, Basingstoke Canal Society- Vice-Chairman
James Taylor, Strategic Manager- Basingstoke Canal (SCC/HCC)
Jane Lovett, Honorary Treasurer
Fiona Shipp, Canal Manager- Basingstoke Canal Authority (BCA)

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Chairman of the Basingstoke Canal Society introduced the report and outlined the completion of Crookham Wharf last year made more accessible to boats and especially disability users of the canal. There was ongoing work at Farnborough Road "Holland" Moorings, named after a benefactor. However the project was stopped for 4-5 months due to concerns by Natural England over increased turbidity levels.
2. The Committee was also informed of the increased boat trip operations, particularly the larger *John Pinkerton II* and the smaller *Kitty* trip boat attracting people internationally to the Woking area. There was a new information board funded through the Surrey County Council community fund and the Society made a contribution to Woking wharf which opened at the end of May.
3. The Chairman of the Basingstoke Canal Society reported that low water supplies were a continuing problem and that a pumping solution for Deepcut, was discounted due to cost. Swan "cutting" was noted as an ongoing concern where larger boats cannot get through that

section of the Canal, especially the *John Pinkerton* trip boat which was a key source of income for the Society. The BCS expressed that they would like to see an acceleration of Hampshire County Council's Legal Services department on the issue. However, the Strategic Manager and the Honorary Treasurer explained that the Swan "cutting" project could not be accelerated as the delay was from a requirement to go to land owners first before having the design of the project.

4. Basingstoke Canal Society representatives asked Officers for clarification on the policy surrounding commemorative benches along the Canal. The Canal Manager (BCA), reported that the Authority would be using Hampshire County Council's policy and had agreed designs and prices. Benches would be sourced from the saw mill in Norbury Park in Surrey with a ready-made style to complement the Canal, and those who have enquired about the benches have been contacted.
5. The Committee was informed by the Chairman of the Basingstoke Canal Society of the sad news of the recent death of Robin Higgs OBE, a past Society chairman. The Committee agreed that there should be a commemorative bench for him and joint funding would be considered.
6. Members from Rushmoor Borough Council informed the Committee of support that could be offered to the Basingstoke Canal Authority. A Rushmoor BC member informed the Committee that they are the Cabinet Champion for Culture and Destination 2019/20 and along with the Canal Manager they are in contact with a Biodiversity Officer at Rushmoor BC and noted the positive contribution to the Basingstoke Canal Authority. Another Rushmoor BC member reported that there was a Farnborough airport community environmental fund grant and that for every take-off or landing at Farnborough airport, there was a grant to help support local projects such as the Basingstoke Canal too.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

1. A6/19: the Committee agreed to look into the options of providing a commemorative bench for Robin Higgs OBE, a former Basingstoke Canal Society chairman.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the report.

3318 PLANNING GUIDANCE NOTE [Item 918]

Witnesses:

James Taylor, Strategic Manager- Basingstoke Canal (SCC/HCC)

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Strategic Manager introduced the draft report jointly prepared with the Basingstoke Canal Society. The report provided responses to planning applications that affect the canal corridor. The Canal passes through seven Local Planning Authorities, 90% is designated an SSSI and it is an important landscape feature and recreational area as a “green-gym”. Officers explained that this Planning Guidance Note was based on a similar document of the River Wey.
2. Members informed the Committee of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds held by local authorities. In some areas such as Surrey Heath, ward members have a proportion of this for local Community Infrastructure projects. Officers were aware of this and this report would aid in unlocking funding from CIL. Members also stated that where CIL was in place in borough councils, parish councils had access to 25% of that CIL. In response, the parish councils’ representative explained that many parish councils are going through a neighbourhood planning process.
3. The Strategic Manager reported that applications for CIL are different in each council and that in response to a question from the Chairman of the Committee, the BCA is not a statutory consultee. The Chairman of the Committee also asked Officers for clarification on borough council planning applications relating to the Canal and the Strategic Manager stated that Hampshire County Council are written to by borough councils.
4. The Strategic Manager asked the Committee’s approval for Officers to consult Local Planning Authorities and responded to Member and special interest group representatives’ query over the deadline of the final document. The revised final document would be ready for sign-off at the November meeting of the Committee.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

1. A7/19: The revised final Planning Guidance document will be ready for sign-off at the November meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

The Committee approved the draft Basingstoke Canal Planning Guidance Note for use as a consultation draft, and authorised Officers to consult with all Local Planning Authorities within the Canal corridor, and other appropriate stakeholders with expertise in planning.

3418 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 1018]

The Committee led by the Vice-Chairman issued a vote of thanks for Lisa Creaye-Griffin, the Countryside Group Manager who will shortly be leaving Surrey County Council.

The Committee noted that its next meeting would be on 21 November 2019.

Meeting ended at: 11.51 am

Chairman