

MINUTES of the meeting of the **BASINGSTOKE CANAL JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held at Mytchett Canal Centre, Mytchett Place Road, Mytchett, Surrey, GU16 6DD on 21 November 2019
These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting 24 June 2020

(* = Present)

Hampshire County Council

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

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

Special Interest Groups

Basingstoke Canal Society

*Mr Philip Riley
*Mr Ken Sankey

Hart District Association of Parish Councils

Mr Alastair Clark

Surrey County Council

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

Guildford Borough Council

*Councillor Angela Gunning

Runnymede Borough Council

Councillor Brian Clarke

Surrey Heath Borough Council

*Councillor Sarah Jane Croke

Woking Borough Council

*Councillor Kevin Davis
*Councillor Rob Leach

Natural England

*Mr Adam Bates

Inland Waterways Association

*Mrs Verna Smith

Basingstoke Canal Canoe Club

Mrs Liz Murnaghan

Galleon Marine

*Mr Arthur McCaffrey

Substitutes:

James Freemanle acted as a substitute for Mrs Liz Murnaghan

Clive Grattan acted as substitute for John Marsh

3518 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 1]

Apologies were received from John Marsh, Ben Carasco, Liz Murnaghan and Alastair Clark.

Clive Grattan acted as substitute for John Marsh and James Freemantle acted as a substitute for Liz Murnaghan.

3618 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 26 JUNE 2019 [Item 2]

Kevin Davis highlighted that he was present at the last meeting was marked absent in the minutes. The Chairman agreed to amend the minutes to correct the error.

Subject to the above amendment, the minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

3718 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

None received.

3818 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

There were no questions or petitions received.

3918 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTIONS TRACKER [Item 5]

Witnesses:

James Taylor, Strategic Manager – Basingstoke Canal

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. In regards to Action A5/19, the Strategic Manager highlighted that a response had now been received from Natural England detailing why the Basingstoke Canal did not receive the Water Environment Grant (WEG). Officers highlighted that letters of support were given more weight than had been expected, but that it was not always possible given short application windows. The representative from Natural England reassured the Committee that there would be other opportunities for funding in the future.
2. The Chairman asked members of the Committee to send any suggestions for future items to the Strategic Manager as soon as possible.

4018 APPOINTMENT OF SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS [Item 6]

Declarations of interest:

None

Witnesses:

James Taylor, Strategic Manager – Basingstoke Canal

Key points raised during the discussions:

1. The Strategic Manager introduced the item and highlighted that the Committee comprised of 18 voting Members and up to 8 co-opted non-voting representatives of particular special interests, and noted that there were now two vacancies amongst the special interest groups
2. The Strategic Manager first recommended that Galleon Marine LLP, who were at the end of their 4 year appointment, be appointed for a further two years to May 2021 which would bring their membership in line with the other special interest groups. The Strategic Manager

went on to recommend that that Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council were appointed as a Special Interest Group until May 2021. To fill vacancy amongst the special interest groups left by the National Trust, River Wey and Godalming Navigations stepping down.

3. A representative from the Basingstoke Canal Society stated that this was a positive development and that they hoped to work closely with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council in the future.

Resolved:

That the Committee:

- a) Agreed the re-appointment of Galleon Marine LLP for a further two years until May 2021;
- b) Co-opts Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council as a Special Interest Group until May 2021.

4118 FORECAST OUTTURN 2019/20 AND FORWARD BUDGET 2020/21 [Item 7]

Declarations of interest:

None

Officers:

Jane Lovett, Honorary Treasurer, Hampshire County Council
James Taylor, Strategic Manager, Basingstoke Canal

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Honorary Treasurer introduced the report and provided members with a brief summary. It was highlighted that overall the current forecast showed that the Canal would need to make a draw from its reserves of £94,000 rather than the planned balanced budget. Members noted that the budget produced for 2020/21 suggested a draw on reserves of £36,000 which related to tree works which were being rescheduled from 2018/19. Members were pleased to hear of a £30,000 saving in the budget resulting from the good performance of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) fund which had led to past pension costs now being fully funded. They agreed to use the saving in the budget for the next three years to fund a part-time Canal Project Officer on a three-year fixed term contract. The position will be reviewed in three years' time and hopefully the saving can at that point be permanently repurposed. Members noted that currently staff did not have the capacity to fully support the capital programme and the potential campsite scheme therefore the proposed post would help address the staffing aspect of the delays in delivering the capital programme. Officers concluded by stating that the overall finances of the Canal were currently acceptable but that it would become more strained going forward. There was ongoing work to find alternative sources of income which would be essential to relieve some of the pressure.
2. A representative from Fleet Town Council raised concerns that Surrey Heath Borough Council and Runnymede Borough Council were not

contributing the full amount to the funding formula. The representative from Surrey Heath explained that this was a long standing issue and that there was an appetite at Surrey Heath Borough Council to support the Canal in the best way it could. It was stated that the upcoming General Election was restricting the amount of work being done but that it was likely a meeting to discuss the situation would take place with Surrey Heath Councillors in the new year.

3. In regards to A3/19 of the previous meeting, Members noted that the Leader of Surrey Heath Borough Council had not yet responded to an invitation to visit the Canal Centre. The Committee agreed to resend the invitation as an email and include Cllr Paul Deach and Cllr Sarah Jane Croke.
4. Members noted that Scotland Bridge car park had not been refurbished yet and had remained on the capital programme for some time. Officers informed the Committee that this was due to the lack of staff resource already noted, but highlighted that once the car park was operational there would be an opportunity to implement parking charges for its use as previously agreed. Officers noted that Runnymede Borough Council had offered to pay for parking meters to implement parking charges which would more than make up for the shortfall in their contribution.
5. Members also questioned whether Surrey County Council would be paying the rental income from the houseboats and canal cottages to the Canal Partnership in future. Richard Parkinson, Environment Delivery Group Manager, Surrey County Council, highlighted that, due to Surrey County Council's financial situation, the income accumulated from the canal estate would likely only be allocated to the Canal Partnership to replace the County Council's current contribution and not in addition to it. This way the Canal Partnership would have more control over how the canal estate generated income. Officers also noted that a decision was required as the matter had been outstanding for some time. The Committee requested that confirmation be provided on this before the next meeting. Various members of the Committee expressed concern that Surrey County Council had no justification to receive the revenue that the Canal generated. The Chairman highlighted that the Canal relied on the goodwill of councils to contribute funding and that it was not a statutory duty.
6. Members of the committee stressed the importance of investing in incoming generating opportunities for the Canal.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

1. In regards to A3/19 of the previous meeting, Members noted that the Leader of Surrey Heath Borough Council had not yet responded to an invitation to visit the Canal Centre. The Committee agreed to resend the invitation as an email and include Cllr Paul Deach and Cllr Sarah Jane Croke.
2. Officers highlighted that the income accumulated from the canal estate in Surrey would likely not be paid to the Canal Partnership in addition to its existing funding but in place of it. The Committee requested that confirmation be provided on this before the next meeting.

Resolved:

The Basingstoke Canal Joint Management Committee:

1. reviewed and agreed the revenue outturn forecast for the year 2019/20; and
2. reviewed and agreed the revenue budget for 2020/21; and
3. reviewed and agreed the proposed scheme of charges for 2020/21 set out in Appendix D.

4218 CANAL MANAGEMENT REPORT [Item 8]

Declarations of interest:

None

Officers:

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

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Canal Manager introduced the report and provided members with an overview. Members noted the following:
 - a) The Ranger Team had not been able to conduct all annual inspections on the Canal's assets. One of the Ranger posts will prioritise inspection work going forward to make sure all inspections are achieved.
 - b) Maintenance and inspection work carried out by the Basingstoke Canal Authority since the last meeting.
 - c) Officers highlighted the importance of volunteers supporting the work of the Canal. Members noted that officers were looking to train volunteers to become volunteer leaders to be able to conduct more specialised work.
 - d) The Basingstoke Canal Authority had conducted a detailed boat use survey which revealed that much of the channel was well below the 1300 powered boat movements limit per year, but that Colt Hill and the Canal Centre were already at around the maximum level of use. Officers stated that, in addition to the management of the site, a more detailed boat survey was required because the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Department for Transport (DfT) had issued a call for evidence on carbon emissions from the inland waterway sector .
 - e) Noted developments on the Asset Management Programme as outlined in the report.
 - f) Members noted that planning permission was received in March from Surrey County Council for the Canal Centre Campsite redevelopment and the grant application was submitted at the end of October. It was

stated that If the grant was successful officers hoped to see contractors on-site by early February for a 30 week build.

2. A Member of the Committee asked whether the Canal allowed for schools and corporate teams to spend the day at the Canal to volunteer help and complete activities. Officers explained that in the past they held education programmes but this was stopped due to the strain on resource. There was still an opportunity to do pond dipping and a boat trip which was self-led and required attendees to hire equipment to allow the Canal to make an income.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

Resolved:

The Basingstoke Canal Joint Management Committee noted the report.

4318 BASINGSTOKE CANAL AUTHORITY RISK REGISTER [Item 9]

Declarations of interest:

None

Officers:

James Taylor, Strategic Manager, Basingstoke Canal

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Strategic Manager introduced the report and provided a brief summary. Members noted that there was minimal change from the previous year and that the key risks continued to orientate around funding.
2. Members noted that the risk on the failure to comply with the Reservoirs Act leading to enforcement orders and prosecution had been reduced due to a new Supervising Engineer being employed.
3. In regards to the risk on the excessive use of back pumping systems leading to prosecution by the Environment Agency, officers confirmed that this was to be deleted as Legal advice agreed that abstraction licences were not required for backpumps.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

Resolved:

The Basingstoke Canal Joint Management Committee noted the annual revision of the Risk Register.

4418 REPORT OF THE BASINGSTOKE CANAL SOCIETY [Item 10]

Declarations of interest:

None

Officers:

Phillip Riley, Chairman (Basingstoke Canal Society)

Ken Sankey Co-Vice-Chairman (Basingstoke Canal Society)

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Chairman of the Basingstoke Canal Society introduced the report and provided Members with an outline of the report. Member noted the following:
 - a. Details of the construction of new permanent boat moorings at Farnborough Road, Aldershot. It was highlighted that the whole cost of the job was being borne by the Canal Society and that the work was being undertaken entirely by volunteers.
 - b. The Canal Society had agreed to provide £12000 (in two annual instalments) to fund training programmes for volunteers. It had been agreed with the Basingstoke Canal Authority that suitably trained volunteers could undertake more skilled tasks in order to release rangers for other duties.
 - c. Members noted details of the two trip boats which Gross receipts from boat operation exceed £57000.
 - d. Members noted that the Canal Society was developing plans to secure alternative sources of funding. These plans include increasing its membership, encouraging members and supporters to leave legacies to the canal, approaching local businesses for support, and pursuing grant opportunities.
2. The Chairman thanked the Basingstoke Canal Society for the positive report and congratulated them on the events of the rafting day which was held in September 2019. It was noted that Galleon Marine sponsored the event.
3. Members of the Committee discussed the positive work of the Accessible Boating Association which was based at the Galleon Marine Boatyard and provided an opportunity for disabled people to enjoy day boat trips on the Canal. The Committee noted that some Council's provide Councillors with a grant which can be used to fund charities like the Accessible Boating Association. Some Members of the Committee considered allocating a portion of their grant to support the work of the Association.
4. The Member from Woking Borough Council provided an outline of the environmental goals of the Borough Council which included promoting the use of electric boats. The Committee noted that pollution caused by canal boats was a national issue and was something that needed to be considered. The Strategic Manager confirmed that a report on the subject would be considered in the new year. Following further discussion, it was noted that every Council present at the meeting had declared a climate emergency.

Actions/ further information to be provided:

None.

Resolved:

The Committee noted the report.

4518 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 11]

The Committee noted that its next meeting would be on 24 June 2020.

It was noted that there was a possibility the next meeting would be held on a canal boat on the Basingstoke Canal. The Chairman informed members that they would receive confirmation after the meeting.

Meeting ended at: 12.10 pm

Chairman