



## Basingstoke Canal Joint Management Committee

### BCA Risk Register

Date: 6 October 2021

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### Key Issue

To inform the JMC of the key risks associated to the BCA Canal Partnership after annual review and to ensure risks are mitigated as far as possible.

### Summary

A Risk Register is maintained highlighting that the key risks relate to the partnership ceasing to function properly through partners withdrawing funding, or if the BCA fail to inspect critical infrastructure correctly. The annual review has highlighted a significant increase in risk especially surrounding staffing levels.

### Officer's recommendation

That the JMC note the annual revision of the Risk Register

#### 1 Introduction & background

- 1.1 A Risk Register was prepared and reported to Committee in June 2015, building on a register prepared by Officers in 2011.
- 1.2 The register has now been updated following its annual review by the Strategic Manager.

#### 2 Discussion

- 2.1 The majority of risks have not changed with the mitigated risk score remaining static since the first reviewed in 2016.
- 2.2 The highest risk remains around funding of the partnership (BCA 44) with funding partners being unable to continue grants. Officers are concerned that there is an imminent risk of some partners withdrawing some or all of the funds due to the position their authorities have been placed in due to the Covid pandemic.
- 2.3 A further seven (7) risks have got worse or have become more likely in the past 12 months, of these 6 are rooted in the lack of staff highlighted in risk BCA 15 (ability to maintain a trained staff). As stated in other reports the BCA ranger team has not been at full performance for over 12 months and now due to staff leaving for a variety of reasons are at half capacity. For the first time the risk associated with an embankment failure due to an undetected fault (BCA21) is now a **red risk**, whereas risks BCA 15 (staffing levels), BCA 24 (inability to carryout site inspections), BCA53 (culvert inspections), BCA 23 (boundaries) and BCA 25 (maintaining sluices and weirs) remain amber risks but much more likely to occur. There is no quick fix available trained staff are required to perform these functions, however all of these risks will

decline over the next 12 months providing that adequate staff of suitable calibre can be recruited. These risks will continue heighten if staff cannot be recruited (eg: if funding levels decline).

- 2.4 The other risk which has deteriorated is the inability to expand and improve the campsite operation to secure additional revenues for the partnership (BCA 32) – this is due to a capital funding source not being found, nor agreement between the two County Councils as to a way forward.
- 2.5 A further two risks should be highlighted that declined last time and have not improved; these are BCA 17 (Tree management) and BCA 20 (Management of structures eg: bridges). A tree risk improvement plan is proposed to tackle issues surrounding BCA 17 and is appended to this report.
- 2.6 Of the two new specific risks relating to the Covid 19 pandemic reported last year (risks BCA52 and BCA54) – both have improved with the risk reducing due to the national picture improving.
- 2.7 As predicted BCA 28 (Emergency Management Plan) was a one-off decline for specific reasons and the risk has reverted to previous levels.

### 3 Equalities & diversity implications

- 3.1 The risks associated with reduced funding and increasing income may make it more likely that those on low incomes feel less able to use Canal facilities as more charges have to be made.
- 3.2 Any reduction in revenue maintenance for facilities may impact on the provision of facilities, well maintained level towpath, for less able people.

### 4 Crime & disorder implications

- 4.1 The risks associated with Crime & Disorder on the Canal are not significant, and there are no associated risks in the risk register.
- 4.2 Reducing funding and therefore Canal staffing further would make the on the ground presence even less than at present, with anti-social behaviour and associated crimes, such as graffiti or vandalism, likely to rise.

### 5 Conclusion and recommendation

- 5.1 Whilst the concerns over physical inspection of the canal assets due to lack of staffing are all serious, the situation can be cured providing replacement staff of suitable calibre can be recruited.
- 5.2 The highest risk therefore remains around funding, as this might mean that staff cannot be recruited. The Strategic Manager is concerned that developments which could generate more income for the partnership such as the campsite at the Canal Centre have not been approved for funding by either County Council or agreement reached between them on a way forward. This means that the BCA still rely on grants from funding partners for around 65% of their funding at a time when funding cuts look inevitable.
- 5.3 The Strategic Manager recommends that:
- That the JMC note the annual revision of the Risk Register
  - Approve the officer's actions in improving tree risk contained in the Tree Risk Improvement Plan.

### 6 What happens next

- 6.1 JMC Members note the risks and take action to mitigate them, principally through securing funding.
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