

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the **BASINGSTOKE CANAL JOINT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held at Eastwood Leisure Centre, Albert Dr, Sheerwater, Woking GU21 5RF on 26 November 2021.  
These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its next meeting.

\*= in attendance

<p><b>Hampshire County Council</b> Councillor Jonathan Glen* Councillor Rod Cooper* Councillor Stephen Parker* Councillor Timothy Davies*</p>	<p><b>Surrey County Council</b> Councillor Marisa Heath* Councillor Riasat Khan* Councillor Paul Deach* Councillor Saj Hussain*</p>
<p><b>Hart District Council</b> Councillor Simon Ambler* Councillor Ken Crookes</p>	<p><b>Guildford Borough Council</b> Councillor Angela Gunning* <b>Runnymede Borough Council</b> Councillor Scott Lewis* <b>Surrey Heath Borough Council</b> Councillor Helen Whitcroft <b>Woking Borough Council</b> Councillor Kevin Davis* Councillor Rob Leach*</p>
<p><b>Rushmoor Borough Council</b> Councillor John Marsh* Councillor Paul Taylor <b>Fleet Town Council</b> Councillor Peter Wildsmith</p>	
<p><b>Special Interest Groups</b> <b>Basingstoke Canal Society</b> Mr Ian Moore*/Mr Tony Balch <b>Hart District Association of Parish Councils</b> Mr Alastair Clark <b>Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council</b> Mr Mark Ruffell</p>	<p><b>Natural England</b> Mr Adam Bates <b>Inland Waterways Association</b> Mrs Verna Smith* <b>Basingstoke Canal Canoe Club</b> Mr Bill Hansell <b>Galleon Marine</b> Mr Arthur McCaffrey*</p>

#### 1121 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN [Item 1]

The Vice-Chairman, Jonathan Glen, proposed Marisa Heath, to be elected Chairman of the Joint Management Committee (JMC). This was seconded by Cllr Rod Cooper. It was agreed unanimously that Marisa Heath be elected Chairman of the Committee.

#### 1221 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [Item 2]

Apologies were received from Mark Ruffell, Paul Taylor, Helen Whitcroft and Tony Balch

John Turner acted as a substitute for Tony Balch.

**1321 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 18 NOVEMBER 2020 [Item 3]**

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

**1421 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 4]**

Rod Cooper declared a non-pecuniary interest that he was a member of the Basingstoke Canal Society.

**1521 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 5]**

There were no questions or petitions received.

**1621 ACTIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 6]****Declarations of interest:**

None

**Officers:**

None.

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Chairman introduced the actions tracker and forward work programme. The Committee did not raise any comments.

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

None.

**Resolved:**

The Joint Management Committee (JMC) noted that Actions Tracker and Forward Work Programme.

**1721 FINAL ACCOUNTS 2020/21, FORECAST OUTTURN 2021/22, FORWARD BUDGET 2022/23 [Item 7]****Declarations of interest:**

None

**Officers:**

James Taylor, Strategic Manager – Basingstoke Canal

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Chairman noted that the purpose of the report was to present the final accounts of the Basingstoke Canal for the year ended 31 March 2021, the forecast outturn for the year ending 31 March 2022 as at September 2021, and the Forward Budget for the year ending 31

March 2023 to the Joint Management Committee for approval. The Strategic Manager made the following points:

- a. That there was a £32,000 surplus, including £1000 interest, which was largely due to slipped works not carried out during the year.
  - b. The net financial impact due to COVID was fairly small.
  - c. Staffing costs were underspent due to there being a number of vacancies.
  - d. Canal maintenance was significantly underspent due to slipped works.
  - e. Income was under budget due to lost bookings and shop sales. This was offset due to the increase in boat licencing.
  - f. The revised budget for the present financial year reflected the slipped works from the previous year.
  - g. A budget for a Tree Officer post had been moved from the staffing budget to the maintenance budget to allow Surrey County Council's Arboriculture Team to undertake works on a contract basis. It was noted that works had been completed in the Surrey area and were beginning in the Hampshire area.
  - h. The forecast budget for 21/22 was generally on budget.
  - i. Restrictions had continued to affect bookings and that a wet summer had caused limits in camping.
  - j. Income budget had been increased to reflect the increase in boat licences which was expected to continue.
2. The JMC had a short discussion on the dredging of the canal. It was noted that there were different types of dredging, spot dredging and systematic dredging. Spot dredging funding would come out of the maintenance budget and ideally would be undertaken but the Canal's dredger but noted that it was currently broken. If unable to be fixed going forward, officers stated that contractors may need to be brought in to complete works. Systematic dredging had not been completed since 2002 and was a very complicated subject with positives and negatives attached. Members noted that there was no maintenance provisioning the budget and that provision in the capital budget had been relocated to other projects.
  3. A Member asked whether any grants had been received throughout the pandemic. Officers stated that the canal was local authority funded and mostly ineligible for grants.
  4. The JMC noted that there was no current plans for signposting work on the canal due to other matters taking priority.
  5. The Strategic Manager explained that there was no disbenefit in drawing on the expertise of Surrey County Council's Arboriculture Team when required in comparison to having a specific Arboriculture post in the canal's team. There was still a cost to using the service but it was usual practice to have an arrangement like this with one of the partner authorities.

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

None.

**Resolved:**

It was agreed:

1. That the final accounts for the 2020/21 financial year be approved by the Committee.
2. That the Committee approves the revised budget for the 2021/22 financial year.
3. That the Committee notes the forecast outturn for the 2021/22 financial year.
4. That the Committee approves the forward budget for the 2022/23 financial year.

## **1821 CAPITAL WORKS REPORT [Item 8]**

### **Declarations of interest:**

None

### **Officers:**

James Taylor, Strategic Manager

### **Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Strategic Manager introduced the report and made the following points:
  - a. That during the last 10 years there was funding in the capital budget to deal with the maintenance backlog.
  - b. That officers had now successfully reduced the backlog, especially in the Surrey area. Officers were now focusing work on cyclical maintenance rather than a backlog of deferred maintenance.
2. The Strategic Manager provided an overview of the expenditures outlines within annex 1 and 2 of the report.
3. The Strategic Manager also provided detail on special works which including renewing the Surrey houseboat moorings and the provision of funding for a new cycle route. Further details were outlined within the report.
4. The JMC had a discussion on funding from Section 106 agreements. A Member expressed that there was a need to agreed how best to look for contributions from developments which were adjacent from the Basingstoke Canal and would therefore impact the Canal. The Strategic Manager explained that when developments were near the Canal then they often had an impact on the Canal and so officers would look to the development to offset impacts due to wear and tear, biodiversity and more. Further to this, the JMC noted that the Canal Management Team were not a statutory consultee for planning and development projects however a number of boroughs did consult Canal management of a discretionary basis and that officers from Surrey and Hampshire, who are statutory consultees, were able to highlight any upcoming projects to the management team. The Strategic Manager also added that it was usual for developers to contact the management team in advance of submitting a planning application to begin conversations.

5. The JMC noted that the Basingstoke Canal Society also provided the Canal Management Team with a monthly 'planning tracker' which provided an overview of any new developments within a certain area of the Canal. Members went on to state that it was important to begin conversations early with developments to ensure the best outcome.
6. Following discussion, the JMC agreed an action to consider how county, borough and district council planning departments, as statutory consultees, could coordinate their resources to identify upcoming developments within the vicinity of the Basingstoke Canal and seek to receive Section 106 funding to benefit the Canal.

The Chairman, Marisa Health, left the meeting at 12:00pm. It was agreed that the Vice-Chairman, Jonathan Glen, would be chairman for the remainder of the meeting.

7. Members further discussed issues related to dredging and that the Canal's dredger was currently unusable.
8. Rod Cooper moved a motion, seconded by Stephen Parker, to form a working group of Surrey County Council, Hampshire County Council and the Basingstoke Canal Society to consider issues around dredging of the Basingstoke Canal and seek to identify any mitigating actions. The JMC unanimously agreed therefore the motion was carried.

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

1. JMC agreed an action for the Chairman and Strategic Manager – Basingstoke Canal to consider how county, borough and district council planning departments could coordinate their resources to identify upcoming developments within the vicinity of the Basingstoke Canal and seek to receive Section 106 funding to benefit the Canal.
2. The JMC agreed to form a working group of Surrey County Council, Hampshire County Council and the Basingstoke Canal Society to consider issues around dredging of the Basingstoke Canal and seek to identify any mitigating actions.

**Resolved:**

That the Committee note the contents of the report, and delegates final approval of the programmes in each County to the Assistant Director of Natural Environment & Recreation for Hampshire County Council, and the Natural Capital Group Manager for Surrey County Council.

**1921 BCA 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. Officers made the following comments:
  - a. That there were a number of risks that had gone in the wrong direction due to not having enough staff resource.
  - b. That there were issues filling vacant posts.
  - c. That risks related to inspections and works were going in the wrong direction.
  - d. That there was a draft Tree Risk Improvement Plan attached to the report which outlined the current Tree risk situation and potential solutions.
2. Members asked how the Canal Authority had advertised vacancies within the team. The Strategic Manager confirmed that advertisements had been placed within job search platforms, industry journals, the Hampshire Council website and various social media platforms.
3. Members noted that there was currently a national staffing shortage for the 'ranger' posts which the Canal Authority sought to fill.

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

None.

**Resolved:**

The JMC noted the annual revision of the Risk Register.

**2021 CANAL MANAGEMENT REPORT [Item 10]**

**Declarations of interest:**

None

**Officers:**

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

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. The Canal Manager introduced the report and provided the committee with a detailed overview. The detail noted can be found within the officer report.
2. During a discussion about staff vacancies, a member of the JMC asked whether officers had considered recruiting for an apprentice. Officers stated that they had not formally considered an apprentice post however consideration had been put into the creation of lower level posts to allow progression in to higher level posts over time.
3. A Member of the JMC thanked Surrey County Council for resolving an issue related to the Canal Centre Café. Members further stated that they felt the situation could have been handled better but were pleased it reached a conclusion.
4. Members noted that the Basingstoke Canal had a positive summer for visiting boats using the Canal.
5. Officers informed the JMC that the Conservation Management Plan had a limit of 1300 boat movements within any section of the Canal in

one year. During the last boat survey it was seen that the Canal was quite a way under the maximum figure in some areas, but at or near the limit in others..

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

None.

**Resolved:**

The JMC noted the report.

**2121 BASINGSTOKE CANAL SOCIETY REPORT [Item 11]**

**Declarations of interest:**

None

**Officers:**

None.

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

1. Ian Moore, representative from the Basingstoke Canal Society, provided a short overview of the update report.
2. Members asked how many anonymous people donated towards the Basingstoke Canal Society. Ian Moore confirmed that the total figure was close to 20.
3. The JMC thanked the Basingstoke Canal Society for their contribution to the Basingstoke Canal.

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

None.

**Resolved:**

The JMC noted the report.

**2221 ANY OTHER BUSINESS [Item 11a]**

The JMC agreed to amend the Terms of Reference to include the requirement to appoint named substitutes for each voting Member of the Joint Management Committee. A report would be considered at the next meeting for the approval of an updated JMC's Terms of Reference.

**2321 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 12]**

The Committee noted that its next meeting would be on 9 June 2022.

Meeting ended at: 12.35 pm

---

**Chairman**