

## RIVER STOUR TRUST COUNCIL

### **Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 17 April at 7.15pm at Mistley Masonic Hall, Manningtree**

**PRESENT:** Mr R. Abbott (RA), Mr R. J. Brown (RB), Mrs S. Brown (SB), Mr J. Burroughs (JB), Mr B. W. Cornell (BC), Mrs N. L. A. Ford-Platt (LF), Mr P. J. Hesketh (PH), Mr J. Morris (JM), Mr R. A. Platt (RAP), Mr A. Richardson (AR), Mr A. Sheldon (AS), Mr J. W. Tritton (JT), Mr G. W. Whybrow (GW) Minutes Secretary - Miss C. F. Burrows (CB)

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

D. Bryce (DB)

#### **2. STARRING OF ITEMS & IDENTIFICATION OF CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

It was **AGREED** to discuss 6.1 (SBOC), 6.2, 6.4, 6.7 and the recent NCBA Presentation under 6.8.

#### **3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (20/03/08)**

Item 3 (page 1): date should read as 21/02/08.

Item 4.6 (page2): replace 'disapproved of' with 'commented on'.

Item 4.5 (page 2): DB (via e-mail) asked that the minutes record that she had said 'The Information Commissioner would require to see further breaches of data protection prevented in future' **NOT CARRIED**

It was **AGREED** that 'subject to these amendments, the minutes of 20/03/08 are accepted as a true record'

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

##### **4.1 Landing Stages (20/03/08, page 1, item 3, 1<sup>st</sup> bullet point)**

PH was pleased to report that the EA will pay the £500 legal costs requested by BDC.

##### **4.1.2 Centralisation of Documentation (20/03/08, page 1, item 4.2)**

AR and LF still to arrange a collection date and time as soon as possible. **ACTION: AR & LF**

##### **4.1.3 Stour Valley Meander (SVM) & PF Partnership (20/03/08, page 1, item 4.3)**

JB had met with LF and RAP to obtain further information. He had been given contact details for the Financial Director, Brian Davis, and JB awaited a reply to his request for a meeting. **ACTION: JB**

##### **4.1.4 Mrs I. P. Bailey (20/03/08, page 2, item 4.4)**

JB confirmed that the Companies Act stated that related transactions must be recorded in the Annual Accounts. It was **AGREED** that the Accounts record Mrs Bailey as LF's sister.

##### **4.1.5 Director's Benefits (20/03/08, page 2, item 4.4)**

DB explained (prior to the meeting via e-mail to AR) that that she had joined the the RST rowing club (O.A.R.) who had used the VEC for approximately 30 minutes. This was confirmed by RB and CB and this arrangement with the O.A.R. group has continued. It was **AGREED** to therefore accept this clarification. Council were reminded that Directors must declare benefits e.g. some Directors are boat crew who are entitled to a free boat trip during the season.

##### **4.1.6 Breach of Data Protection Act (20/03/08, page 2, item 4.5)**

AR explained that two membership lists needed to be maintained with controlled access.

- Membership List 1 (names and addresses only)

To be made available at our registered headquarters for 2 hours when open. This list can be viewed by members at no charge or non-members at a charge of no more than £6.

- Membership List 2 (names, addresses, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses)

A controlled document made available to Council members for legitimate River Stour Trust business only.

#### **4.1.7 Request for Evidence (20/03/08, page 2, item 4.8)**

DB felt it important to resolve the matter before the AGM whilst RAP had suggested delaying this mediation until after the AGM. AR required information from both parties to progress the mediation. It was suggested that DB's persistent request for evidence from RAP should be provided so as to speed this process up. It was stressed that this matter should be resolved as soon as possible as it had been intended not to discuss it further in Council meetings. **ACTION: AR to set schedule and timescale.**

#### **4.1.8 Overdraft Facility (20/03/08, page 2, item 5.1)**

JB explained that the proposal approved by Council was based on incorrect information. A discounted rate had applied since 2004 and this was now discontinued.

**PROPOSED JB/ SECONDED JM** that 'a £15,000 overdraft facility, incurring an annual charge of £250, is adopted' **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **4.1.9 Granary Balcony (20/03/08, page 2, item 4.7)**

Volunteers still had some remedial works to complete whilst a contractor would be chosen to carry out finishing works early next year. **ACTION: LF to write to Sudbury Freeman's Trust to ask whether the £1,000 grant will be available when the works are completed next year.**

#### **4.2 Open Letter (from Lesley Ford-Platt to Peter Hesketh)**

DB had suggested that the letter be removed from the files as being inaccurate and inappropriate. However, the minutes of the last meeting had already been agreed. LF asked for the minutes to record that her letter was fairly written, she and RAP had been subject to offensive behaviour and no-one had thanked RAP although this was refuted.

**PROPOSED JT/ SECONDED PH** that 'Council believes this letter reflects LF's personal opinion and we are removing a copy from the files relating to the Council meeting of Thursday 20 March 2008' **CARRIED (8 in favour, 1 against, 4 abstentions)**

### **5. FINANCIAL REPORT**

#### **5.1 Treasurer's report**

JB had circulated his report (saved on file with a signed copy of these minutes) to Council by e-mail but LF had yet to receive her postal copy. JB asked for the minutes to record his thanks to Alan Davison (AD) for all his help, advice and assistance; and that AD will act as Treasurer's Assistant for the remainder of the year. JB will work at the VEC once a week in order to progress financial matters promptly and expects correspondence for his attention to be directed there.

Council were informed that the Special Projects Account, comprising funds raised for SSM and VEC, had generated an interest of £105.66 that needed to be allocated.

**PROPOSED AS/ SECONDED JM** that 'the SPA interest is split equally between the Stratford St. Mary Lock Restoration Project and Visitor & Education Centre' **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**

It was **AGREED** that, wherever possible, money should be moved between accounts i.e. to offset Main Account overdraft.

### 5.1.2 Stratford Lock Fundraising

JB had advised holding back a 20% contingency fund. It was agreed with in principal but current funds situation would mean that the project is deadlocked. JM suggested that this matter be discussed at the next meeting following discussion within SSM group. LF had posted a written response to JM's enquiry regarding current and planned funding sources but this had not been received prior to this meeting. It was verified that there were no outstanding grant applications for this project.

### 5.1.3 Lock Lintel (LL) Printing Costs

LL would cost £20-30 more than past editions and it was suggested that it might be ready for distribution alongside AGM paperwork. If not, Helen Richardson (HR) and a few local members had offered to hand deliver copies of LL to cut down on postage costs.

### 5.1.4 VEC Lift Loan

It was **AGREED** to defer discussion of this matter.

## 6. REPORTS OF OTHER COMMITTEES AND GROUPS

### 6.1 Sudbury Boat Operation Committee

There was much discussion regarding proposals for increasing Sudbury boat revenue but a proposal would be prepared for the next Council meeting. **ACTION: SBOC, JB & PH**

It was **NOTED** that a boat donated to the Trust still resided at RB and SB's personal residence and SB requested that its removal be arranged for the very near future.

### 6.2 Venues Management

#### 6.2.1 VEC Parking Proposals

RAP circulated his report and a site diagram (saved on file with a signed copy of these minutes). Council were informed (as stated within the report) that the proposals formed the 'basis for negotiation between ourselves and Barratts at the meeting to be brokered by Babergh District Council and Suffolk County Council; agreement would then be need on application (and cost of) planning permission and costs of implementation'. RAP suggested that the associated costs might be met by Barratts, the Baker's Mill Land Management Company, BDC grant, etc but RST would not be committed to any costs. **ACTION: CB to prepare electronic copy of proposal and diagram to circulate to Council by e-mail.**

#### 6.2.2 Relocation of Culvert Grill at Cornard

LF had posted a written response to PH's enquiry regarding further information relevant to this matter but this had not been received prior to this meeting. LF informed Council that she had confirmation in writing that the Management Company would clear debris from the millstream on their land.

#### 6.2.3 Hammerhead Turning

There were concerns that this would not be completed should the building works cease. Council were informed that BDC would insist that the hammerhead was finished and accessible for delivery vehicles and emergency access.

### 6.3 Publicity and Fundraising Committee

AS informed Council that he had taken on Press & Publicity tasks with the assistance of CB and HR and there were lots of ideas and improvements in hand. AS reiterated the request for LF to provide information and templates used for past RST press and publicity. However, LF's decision from the last meeting (20/03/08, page 5, item 10.3, paragraph 2) still stood and AR believed LF was entitled to claim IPR.

RAP confirmed that he would like to continue in the role of PFC Chairman. Council asked that PFC convene before the next Council meeting. Judith Abbott and CB had decided to no

longer serve on the committee. AS and Roger Nisbet (who had expressed an interest in joining) will be invited to attend the next PFC meeting. **ACTION: RAP to convene a PFC meeting and for that committee to prepare proposals for the next Council meeting that include forthcoming fundraising initiatives, funding applications and PFC Terms of Reference.**

It was **AGREED** that AS, HR and CB continue with current revamps of SBO leaflet, Granary noticeboards and event promotion.

## **6.7 RST/EA Consultative Group**

JM was pleased to report that the meeting had been extremely successful and productive. On behalf of RST thanks had been expressed to John Adams who retires at the end of July. There was a £50,000 budget allocated to the Stour but the EA had explained that unfortunately a large percentage of this figure would be spent on consultations, studies and reports. EA to ask Richard Collins (Jacobs Consultants) to contact AR (NavCon Chairman). JT was pleased to report that the EA have agreed responsibility for the repair of Dedham and Flatford Locks with affirmative action to be taken in the near future. Our thriving relationship with the EA had prompted the suggestion to invite other local river organisations to the next meeting to improve communications and collaboration on a wider scale.

## **6.8 NCBA Presentation**

The response had been good and most of those who attended would be undertaking the training. JT asked for clarity regarding RST contribution towards associated charges for completion of the required Medical Form. It was **NOTED** that Council wanted to look into this matter more closely before committing an unknown expenditure. Frank Wallder (IWA Observer) offered to raise this matter for discussion at the forthcoming IWA meeting in August. Council recorded its thanks to JB, RA, Tim Smith and Roger Nisbet for their efforts so far.

## **7. MEMBERSHIP**

There were 6 members that could no longer receive correspondence due to out-of-date contact details but half were Honorary/Life Members. The other half were due to pay an annual subscription so their current payment method needed to be verified. **ACTION: CB** JB asked that all future membership reports record the overall income from membership subscriptions. **ACTION: CB**

## **8. SPECIAL ITEMS**

### **8.1 Annual Accounts (AA)**

JB reiterated his email request for comments regarding the AA.

#### AA Written Report

The following amendments were put forward:

- Follow the first sentence (page 3, paragraph 8, line 1) with 'We plan to continue this work in the Summer of 2008.'
- Remove the word 'canoe' (page 4, paragraph 1, line 1)
- Remove the entire paragraph (page 4, paragraph 4) excluding the last sentence, 'Peter Hesketh was appointed to fill a vacancy in September'
- Move the aforementioned sentence to the end of the paragraph (page 2, paragraph 10)
- End the paragraph (page 3, paragraph 7) with 'We expect it to come fully into use in 2008.'

## AA Financial Statement

The following amendments were put forward:

- Page 9: JB stated that those listed as 'Creditors (falling due within one year)' were actually 'Creditors (falling due after more than one year)'. LF agreed with JB's assertion that £10,000 Scarfe loan and £2,000 Glossop Foundation loan were both due in 2009 whilst the £1,000 Burroughs Estate loan could be requested at any point. There was confusion regarding a lack of information regarding £1,000 loan from Pamela Smith that would therefore be recorded as 'Creditors (falling due after more than one year)'. LF suggested this could actually be Paula Hughes' loan, repayable within a year. **ACTION: LF to check records and inform JB**
- Page 12: An asterisk to be placed alongside both the figure for Granary Running Costs and the accompanying written note below in order to highlight that staff wages were included within this total.

**PROPOSED AS/ SECONDED JM** that 'Council accept the Annual Accounts, subject to the amendments' **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**

It was **AGREED** that the current Chairman of the Council and the Trust Secretary would sign off the AA.

JM ask that the minutes record thanks to AD and JB for all their efforts.

### **8.2 Council Elections Procedure**

AR understood that some members had expressed interest in standing for Council. He suggested that candidates respond in writing, including a brief introduction, to our registered headquarters by 5 May 2008. This requirement would be outlined in his letter giving advance notice of the AGM to be sent out ideally by the end of this week. **ACTION: AR/CB** Council members standing for re-election/confirmation were asked to submit a 100-word statement to accompany those submitted by any new candidates. **ACTION: RA, DB, JB, SB, BC, PH, RAP, AR, AS**

AR said that postal ballot papers should be received by 30 May 2008 or deposited in a ballot box at the AGM. Frank Wallder had offered to open the received postal ballot papers on the day of the AGM.

AR explained that motions put forward and backed by 5% of the membership would automatically go on the agenda; otherwise they would be put to Council for consideration at the next meeting in May. He stressed that AGM paperwork needs to be sent out by 9 May at the latest. Unfortunately, preparation for this mailing was limited as postage costs and size of envelopes could not be determined as the paperwork was not yet finalised and it was not confirmed whether LL would be ready for distribution at the same time.

It was **AGREED** that a Special Council Meeting take place at the VEC on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> May in order to solely discuss arrangements for the AGM. It was **NOTED** that GW, RA, RAP and LF offered their apologies. The paperwork would then need to go out by the end of the week and any offer of help with this task was appreciated.

### **8.2 Revised Memorandum & Articles of Association (1<sup>st</sup> Draft)**

Copies had been distributed (saved on file with a signed copy of these minutes) but Council were informed that it was unlikely that the revised MAA would be ready for distribution as further discussion and a legal perspective might be required. JM queried where it was stipulated for the need to consult the membership regarding the MAA. **ACTION: AR to provide this information to JM.**

## **9. RECENT & FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

### **9.1 Table Top Sale (Sunday 18 May, The Granary)**

The location had moved from the VEC due to parking problems and therefore the date was restricted because of existing Granary bookings. However, the Tea Room would be open with boat trips available. Posters had been distributed and helpers/stall holders were welcome. It was **AGREED** that any advertising for this event would not exceed £50.

### **9.2 Teddy Bear Boat Rides**

CB informed Council that Press Releases had been sent to periodicals covering the local and wider area. Posters were also distributed in town and at a few nurseries and primary schools in order to reach our target audience.

## **10. CORRESPONDENCE**

### **10.1 Contributions towards Mills & Reeve Payment**

Following the last meeting (20/03.08, page 5, item 11.1) PH informed Council that there had been 4 negative responses thus far.

## **11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- Special Council Meeting (AGM Discussion) on Tuesday 6 May 2008 at 7pm at Visitor & Education Centre
- Thursday 15 May 2008 at The Granary, Sudbury

## **12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **12.1 Council Meeting Venue - Masonic Hall, Manningtree**

Council approved of the venue and the charge of £1 per head. The charge for use of the venue for the last meeting was confirmed as £19. However, a capped figure would need to be confirmed should attendance exceed 30 people. **ACTION: JT**

### **12.2 VEC Working Party on Saturday 19 April**

GW invited those all those present to come along and help.

**The meeting closed at 11pm**