

RIVER STOUR TRUST COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 16 April 2014 19:00 hours, at the VEC, Gt Cornard

Present: Andrew Richardson (AR) - Chairman; Mike Finch (MF), Jane Rogers (JR), Gareth Cole (GC), Jim Lunn (JL), Brian Cornell (BC). Also present Catherine Burrows (CB), Jeff Burroughs (JB)

1 Weedcutting

Jeff Burroughs asked about weedcutting plans this year. MF said that the Environment Agency were believed to putting some together, but no details were yet known. It was agreed that we would pay for weedcutting on a similar basis to last year if the Agency were unable to cut appropriately. Action MF to ask the Agency about weedcutting. JB also said that he could make his raft available for work at Stratford St Mary provide it did not conflict with weedcutting.

2 Apologies for Absence

Roger Brown, Emrhys Barrell, James Parkinson

3 Identification of confidential business, and notification of AOB

Confidential: Staffing.

4 Minutes of the Meeting of 22 Feb 2014 – identification of confidential items for web version

Motion: GC proposed JR seconded, That the minutes were a true record. Carried unanimously. Motion: JR proposed MF seconded, That the web-site version of the minutes be shown unchanged, except for the deletion of the reference to commission payments in item 6. Carried unanimously.

5 Matters Arising not covered by the Agenda

AR said that the Coracle Regatta was under threat as the Environment Agency would no longer allow unregistered boats for short events, and all craft had to register. It was agreed that this year the Trust would pay for, and issue, EA short-term licences for all unregistered coracles on the day of the regatta. GC thanked JL for attending at the Quay Lane car-park to prevent all-day parking by commuters. JL said that 4 apparently abandoned cars had been reported to Babergh DC. JR said the food hygiene course had been a success and all candidates passed. She said the boat leaflets needed final approval before going to the printers.

6 Treasurer's Report – GC

GC presented his report. The balance in the main account on 21 Feb was £22,416. He noted that the Environment Agency had already donated £10,000 to the Flatford lock restoration project, and that he intended to move money between the main and special projects account in connection with the restoration. He said that he and BC had visited Babergh planning department in connection with proposed changes to the Granary layout and they were helpful. He said there was no progress to report on the section 106 money at Cornard for a waterbus.

7 Dedham & Flatford Lock refurbishment

GC said that at a recent site meeting a representative from the AONB project had the work explained, and expressed general approval. He reported that Babergh DC said planning permission was needed, and this was being followed up. MF said he still needed to write to our solicitors about a suggested lease. MF said that the dam remains at Stratford St Mary needed to be removed soon and that some other work may be possible in the summer.

8 Staffing

CB had told the Council of her pregnancy, with the baby expected towards the end of August. It was agreed that the Trust will pay her maternity pay, and give her maternity leave in line with legislation. CB said she planned to return to work after her maternity leave. JR volunteered to work for the Trust as an administrator to cover the gap when CB was on leave. MF said that our constitution would not allow Trustees to be paid, even though the 2006 Charities Act now made it possible; he said the constitution would need changing to allow this. JR said she would resign as a Trustee during her paid period of work, but as administrator she would still report to Council meetings. AR thanked her for this offer, and said JR's experience and knowledge of the Trust made this a very suitable appointment.

Motion JL proposed BC seconded: That Jane Rogers be appointed as administrator on a temporary basis while CB is on leave and starting 1 July. Carried unanimously, with JR not taking part in the vote.

8 Minutes of other Meetings

SBOC. BC reported that training of new recruits had started, with mixed results initially. JL said that EB

planned that Edwardian Lady would be brought to Sudbury and launched very soon. LRG. John Baxter had taken over as secretary to the group. MF said Kathleen and Trusty had been launched, and Kathleen showed no signs of leakage. CB reported that a planning meeting for this year's S2C would take place on 2 May.

11 Recent and forthcoming events

AGM. MF reported that the directors due to retire this year under our Article's rules were JL, GC and BC. All agreed to offer themselves for re-election. GC said the accounts would be circulated for Trustees' approval shortly.

12 Correspondence

MF said he had received a letter from Eden-Rose Coppice asking about progress on the land sale of part of the Granary Cut. MF said he had apologised, and said it awaited his efforts in organising a valuer/surveyor.

13 Administrator's report

CB circulated her report. The main items were changes to the Granary hire terms, glazing at the Granary, problems with Paypal processing, problems with trip boat bookings and unpaid boat storage.

14 Membership report

CB distributed the latest membership report. Motion: MF proposed GC seconded: That the new members be accepted. Carried unanimously.

16 Any Other Business

BC said phone access was needed in the VEC but outside the office in an emergency. It was agreed to look at the possibility of putting a mobile phone in the VEC shed.

MF reported that the EA were unable to make progress on improving Bures portage/eel by-pass as they were unable to reach agreement with the land owner.

It was agreed to lower the lighter hire rate to £200, as the current figure of £250 seemed to put off hirers.

17 Date and time of next meeting

Thursday 29 May 19:00 VEC.

Meeting closed 21.45