

**Minutes of the River Stour Trust Council meeting
held on Thursday 16 June 2016 at Grove House, Dedham**

Those present: Emrhys Barrell (EB) – via Skype, Roger Brown (RB), Sue Brown (SB), Gordon Denney (GD), Bob Foster (BF), Jim Lunn (JL), John Morris (JM),

Taking Minutes: Catherine Burrows (CB, Administrator)

Observers: Mike Finch, Jax Horswill, Pam Johnson, James Parkinson,

1. **Apologies received:** Sue Cooper (SC), Mick Rogers (MR)
2. **Confidential Business:** Appended to these minutes.

Any Other Business:

- a. Weedcutting

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 5 May 2016

RB proposed acceptance of the Minutes, seconded by JL; approved unanimously

It was agreed that, subject to the correction of a couple of spelling errors, the minutes be published online.

Action: CB

4. Matters arising from those Minutes of 5 May 2016

- RSUG & SBOC Publicity – Mike Harrington-Spier had agreed to undertake both these tasks but had since resigned from Council and SBOC. It was understood that David Kirkman (DK) was acting as SBOC Chair.

ACTION: JM to follow up with DK

- FJ Stability testing by Steve Moffatt – It was unknown whether MR had yet spoken to S. Moffatt. **ACTION: JM to follow up with MR**

- Company Secretary – It was clarified that it the RST Articles that stipulate the need for a Company Secretary rather than Company Law. Companies House has not been updated with recent changes and it was **AGREED** to update after the AGM along with details of the new Trustees. **ACTION: CB**

5. Treasurer's Report & Draft Accounts

The Profit & Loss report and Balance sheet report for the period January-May 2016 (printed 08/06/16) had been circulated prior to the meeting. There was almost a profit of £13,000 but it was **NOTED** that this did not comprise all transactions during that period but was nonetheless indicative of financial activity.

RB explained that the galvaniser for the SSM stop logs wanted payment before delivery (£1270 + VAT). CB asked that paperwork be forwarded to the office and payment could be made by a personal card that would then be reimbursed by RST. **ACTION: RB**

GD informed Council that RST was limited to 200k euros of De Minimis Aid over 3 years and this included EA funding. **ACTION: GD to pass information on to SC.**

6. Recent and Forthcoming Events

Coracle Regatta – CB explained that the organisation of this event had been taken over by members of the Coracle Society when it appeared that there was no-one in RST willing to continue running the event a few years ago. It was still billed as a RST event and we had been covering the insurance. Andrew Richardson had been the main RST presence but had confirmed he would not be involved this year and had said a RST presence was required for the insurance to be valid. CB had checked with Neil Edwards (IWA Corporate Insurance contact) and this was not a requirement but a useful checklist for events and when to inform our insurers had been provided. Steve Miles was the main contact for the event and had joined RST last year. There was some discussion about safety aspects and the benefits of retaining this event on the RST calendar. In particular, it was **AGREED** that RST should provide lifejackets/buoyancy aids for members of the public offered a go on a coracle. **ACTION: JL to contact Steve Miles to confirm that he will attend the event and offer first aid assistance and RST presence.**

VEC Educational Visit – A group of 9 year olds from Layer de la Haye School are visiting on 22 June for our educational package that comprises a talk about the history of the river navigation and activities including boat trips, lock operation and river dipping.

Cattawade School Visit – A teacher from Engaines School has been in touch to obtain our consent to have a portaloos installed at the Cattawade picnic site on Thursday 30 June for a school-led educational visit, 9am until 3pm. CB had checked with JM and Jax Horswill about this and confirmed that the school can go ahead. It was hoped to get an article for Lock Lintel and a donation.

7. AGM

It was **AGREED** that JM will chair the meeting. CB to make arrangements for provision of tea and coffee. Mike Finch offered to assist with answering questions regarding the accounts. CB will make arrangements for childcare that evening and take the minutes. It was **NOTED** that the Council recorded its thanks to the volunteers who assisted with the AGM postal mailing; namely Ann Clark, John Kemp, Brian Marchment, Dora Marchment, John Morris, James Parkinson, Gill Phillips. CB mentioned that the postal mailing had cost about £480 (£220 postage and £260 printing) and that matches the saving made by those opting for electronic receipt of the papers as it was almost a 50/50 split between postal and electronic delivery.

8. Stratford St Mary, Dedham & Flatford Locks & Portages

Stratford St Mary Lock – GD reported that a bespoke permit had been submitted for the works this year and planning permission for the lock gates next year had also been applied for. GD explained that the latter had cost £180.00 and had been paid without recourse to the Council/Treasurer because it was an online submission that required payment at the end or lose all the information that had been entered! GD was awaiting feedback from Essex & Suffolk Water about the construction of a footbridge. Three lock builders have been approached: Hargreaves (quote submitted), Martin Childs (quote awaited) and Wijma (site visit tomorrow). GD reminded Council that discussions regarding funding were ongoing with Cory and Veolia.

GD reminded Council that discussions regarding funding of circa £90k were ongoing with and Veolia. Also, the EA might contribute towards the cost of the bridge. GD and BF were confident that the bridge will be completed this year since the previous planning application was accepted and any comments from that will be covered in this new application. The £9,500 EA partnership funding was clarified as being put toward Stratford St Mary lock, a culvert at Dedham (which would improve access to the canoe portage point by Dedham lock) and a jetty at Bures (not the portage).

Stratford St Mary Jetty – It was noted that LRG now support the gate and bridge over the culvert (rather than the alternative gate and steps).

Dedham Lock – JM and Mike Finch had met with Gary Cockett from the EA who has outlined intentions to speak with all sluice gate owners about their need to operate the gates.

Flatford Lock – The EA have removed the flashers and Flatford Field Studies Council (FSC) are operating the sluice gates on weekdays whilst the National Trust (NT) are operating them on weekends. We are in talks with John Blair of FSC who is monitoring the flow gauges at Lamarsh and River Brett to maintain the level at Flatford ensuring Stour Trusty II can operate. It is also hoped to get a flow gauge installed on Flatford Bridge. Dedham Vale AONB & Stour Valley Project (DVSVP) have approached 3 contractors for repairs to the riverbank with the lowest quote coming in at £18k! It was confirmed that the EA still intend to put the tilting gates out of action and cease operating them next year.

It was **NOTED** that the EA have pointed out that Ekke wood (used for Flatford Lock gates and intended for SSM Lock gates) was extremely carcinogenic so care was to be taken should any work be carried out on them in the future.

9. Boat Operations

Sudbury Boat Operations – The unapproved minutes of a meeting held on 27/04/16 had been circulated. A more recent meeting has taken place but no minutes had been made available at this time.

JL reported that Aquamot were happy to replace the two motor controllers at cost i.e. 500 euros per controller.

Lower River Group – The unapproved minutes of the most recent meeting held on 05/05/16 had been circulated.

10. Granary Refurbishment

Quotes should be known by the next Council meeting and GD is still seeking funding for this project. CB and GD had a site meeting with Groundworks who have offered advice on the types of appliances to maximise energy efficiency and make cost savings in the long term. This should be referred to in order to obtain funding from their funding sources. CB will speak to our regular caterers and visit Jam Tartz kitchen to discuss appropriate types of appliances to include in the kitchen refit. It was **NOTED** that there was currently no Trustee involved with this project.

11. Administrator's Report – Already discussed under other items.

12. Correspondence

- a) Letter from Angler – This was a follow up to a letter sent in October regarding a trip boat catching and breaking his fishing line. **ACTION: JM to respond.**
- b) Email regarding flooding at Flatford – A rambler had contacted us to complain about the flooded footpath and JM had responded to outline the situation. No further response had been received.

13. Membership report

JM was concerned that reports from April had perhaps not been received due to the Membership Secretary not being kept in the loop about meeting date changes. All the new members from April 2016 were read out and it was **AGREED** to accept all these new members. It was pointed out that Sudbury Rowing Club had not been included within this group although corporate membership had been required in lieu of a mooring charge for the newly installed jetty. **ACTION: JM/CB**

14. Any Other Business

- a) Confidential Item
- b) Roles – JM has devised a list of roles that needed to be fulfilled to ensure the smooth running of RST. Some of these were filled (Chairman, Bookkeeper, Administrator, Caretaker, Cleaner, Boat Operations Manager, Treasurer, Harbour Master) but a job specification was lacking in all cases other than the paid staff. JM also mentioned that the Administrator's job requirements were excessive and he could not fathom how it was possible to undertake all that was required; especially as RST was not filling roles that the Administrator was meant to work alongside. **ACTION: JM to send list of roles to Council in order for job specifications to be drawn up.**

CB said that RST was not very good at keeping its members informed about its day to day management, successes and issues. EB suggested a members' event incorporating RST boats to update people and engage with potentially active supporters. BF pointed out that the volunteer centres focus on the boat crewing opportunity. EB said an A5 leaflet to distribute on the boats could bring in new members and active volunteers for a variety of roles. **ACTION: EB**

15. Date of next meeting:

Thursday 14 July 2016, at Visitor Education Centre, Great Cornard

NB: BF kindly offered use of his personal residence to ensure good mobile and internet reception to enable EB's participation via Skype.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21.06pm