

RIVER STOUR TRUST COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 7 Nov 2013 19:00 hours, at the VEC, Gt Cornard

Present: Roger Brown (RB); Andrew Richardson (AR), Chairman; James Parkinson (JP); Mike Finch (MF); Jane Rogers (JR). Also present Vice President Emrhys Barrell (EB), Catherine Burrows (CB), IWA rep Edward Gittins (EG)

1 Apologies for Absence

Jim Lunn, Gareth Cole

2 Identification of confidential business, and notification of AOB topics

No confidential business. AOB topics, publicity leaflets, Cattawade site, VEC lift, new Council member, boat arrangements for 2014, Christmas cards, publicity for volunteer skippers, Boat Master licence changes, digger hire for Cornard lock lintel repairs.

3 New Council member

AR said that EB had volunteered to join Council, and he welcomed his offer.

Motion: AR proposed MF seconded, That Emrhys Barrell be co-opted onto Council. Carried unanimously.

4 Minutes of the Meeting of 17 Sept 2013 – identification of confidential items

It was pointed out by JP that paragraph numbering was incorrect. Motion: MF proposed JL seconded, That the corrected minutes were a true record. Carried nem con.

5 Matters Arising not covered by the Agenda

It was noted Chris Jowett had resigned from Council, and had returned the Trust's property. The willow trees with Watermark disease had been removed from VEC site. AC reported that the path from Sudbury through to Cornard was expected to be completed next year.

6 Treasurer's Report – GC

GC's report was noted. The monies in the main and savings accounts on 7 Nov was £70,534. In particular bar takings were up on last year, but extra money from MaM was not forthcoming, and a water-taxi service at Cornard could be possible with section 106 money from Barratt Homes.

7 Granary Toilet Refurbishment

BC said that further discussions had lead to the suggestion that the tea-room and kitchen be included in the re-modelling, as the catering contractor has problems with the current layout. It was agreed to follow up on this. Action BC.

8 Dedham & Flatford Lock refurbishment

The Dedham Mill Management Company representatives wish to lease the lock to ourselves, so that we maintain it in future. However they want to also link the protection of the island to this work. A further meeting is planned. GC has applied for grant money for Flatford lock works. Rough estimates for costs are currently £45K for Flatford and £100K – including island bank protection – for Dedham.

EG spoke of Local Enterprise Partnerships, a government initiative to encourage joint working between business, local government and local groups. He said there may be opportunities and funds that the Trust could make use of.

9 Minutes of other Meetings

SBOC – no meeting.

BC said that SBOC plan to increase the size of Cornard jetty, as no boats other than the lighter can use it at present.

LRG. BC said 3 good new skippers had been passed recently. It was agreed to give a thank-you gift of wine to the farmer who made it possible to get Kathleen in and out at Stratford St Mary this year.

10 Recent and forthcoming events

EA consultative meeting. MF said that the EA were looking to help local groups doing weed cutting in future, as a cost saving measure. It was agreed to continue with a contractor next year.

JR said that events had declined in recent years, and organisers were needed to re-start them.

11 Correspondence

None.

12 Membership report

None.

13 Any Other Business

Trust Leaflet. JR to discuss with EB. JR noted that there was no plan for substitution when CB was on leave. It was agreed to organise this when needed, with the first time in December.

Cattawade site. JP said the notice needs repair, also other items needed renovation.

VEC lift. BC said the quoted cost of supplying a lift to replace the VEC access ramp was £7,650. AR said this was not a priority, and it was agreed to defer this as part of a wider strategy plan. BC said the same contractor – Stannah – could supply a battery back-up to the VEC lift, so as to allow its use in a power failure. It was agreed not to pursue this option at present.

Trust boats for next year. EB said that Kathleen was a success at Stratford, and hoped it would also be allowed next year. He said another covered boat was needed at Sudbury to replace her, as the lighter should not be viewed as a replacement. He said Frolics were relatively plentiful and cheap. MF said a bigger boat with more carrying capacity would be better, as crews were in short supply, but EB said the likely size of this could be impossible to tow without a specialist vehicle. It was agreed that EB would look for possible boats. It was noted that the priorities for spending in 2014 were not yet agreed, and that it was likely that not all the projects could be funded.

Christmas cards. EB said the Trust used to send them, and it was good publicity. Also our general merchandising needed improvement. It was agreed to produce some Christmas cards.

Volunteer skipper publicity. EB agreed to organise this.

Cornard lock lintel work. RB said his preferred option for repairing the lock lintel was by use of a digger, which could also do some de-silting of the mill channel. No decision was taken.

Boat Masters Licence changes. BC agreed to ask Dr Roger Squires what the IWA thought of the changes.

AR suggested that our Vice President, Griff Rhys Jones, be offered the opportunity of a day out on John Constable as a thank-you for the work he has done for the Trust and as part of his birthday celebrations; this was agreed.

AR said he and a colleague would be doing an audit of the VEC for fire safety purposes.

14 Date and time of next meeting

Sat 4th Jan 10:00 VEC.