

RIVER STOUR TRUST

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 11 MAY 2017

AT THE GROVE, DEDHAM, courtesy of Bob Foster

Those present: John Morris (JM) in the chair, Emrhys Barrell (EB, via telephone), Paul Brewerton (PB), Gordon Denney (GD), Bob Foster (BF), Pam Johnson (PJ), David Kirkman (DK), Jim Lunn (JL), Alan Thomas (AT)

Catherine Burrows (CB, Administrator), Jane Rogers (JR, Company Secretary, taking notes)

1. Apologies for absence: Roger and Sue Brown, Graham Simmons
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 April 2017.  
Confidential items were identified.
3. Matters arising from those Minutes  
Action Points:  
5a GD was tasked with writing to the IWA, with the approved paragraph relating to acceptance of the grant from the Tony Harrison Legacy. **ACTION: GD**  
Sue Brown had responded to the suggestion re the naming of the lock at SSM; she wished that the lock be named The Roger Brown Lock; this was agreed.  
5c Mike Finch and Brian Cornell were to install the non-slip decking on Flatford Lock Walkway. Material had been ordered.  
13 iii JM and JR met with the accountants re the River Stour Navigation Company and learned that the Company can pursue any activity, and that there should be no problems in re-activating the company, which is currently dormant. The existing directors are Mike Finch and Andrew Richardson, both of whom are willing to continue. JP was suggested as the Trust representative on the RSNC board. This was approved; Mike Finch was to be asked to activate this. RST owns all the shares in RSNC. The company will have its own accounts and bank account. The accountant suggested that RSNC's reporting dates for accounts be brought in line with those of RST, for simplicity.  
13vi JP had adjusted the entrance gates at the VEC to try and prevent unauthorised entry by children.  
13vii JP had checked and replaced lines on all the lifebelts at Gt Cornard and the Granary. The Minutes were approved unanimously.
4. Annual Report and Accounts – draft accounts circulated, with directors' report  
The accounts had been checked by the treasurer, who was happy with the figures. It was noted that, as in the past, the layout was that required by the Charity Commissioners. The first part of the draft of the directors' report was agreed. JR would draft the Future plans part, to be circulated as soon as possible. **ACTION: JR**
5. AGM Update  
JR stated that work was in hand for the paperwork needed for the AGM. The date for mailing out was set at 5 June, in order that papers could reach members in due time before the meeting.

6. Financial Report – previously circulated.

This was accepted.

7. Locks

(a) Stratford St Mary

Following the award of a grant from the IWA, GD announced that we could meet the terms and conditions linked to the award.

It was therefore resolved that the Trust accept the grant. Proposed: GD, seconded JM. Approved unanimously.

**ACTION: GD** to reply to the IWA

Ongoing work on the lock: Hargreaves had been to SSM and taken down the old gates, measured them, and retrieved the ironwork for the new gates. The old gates had been left in the lock chamber and the team were endeavouring to cut them down to a manageable size to remove them. JL requested a piece so that he could create an appropriate plaque.

JP suggested that the wood be taken to Cattawade, where it could sit until its disposal was agreed. This was rather than leaving it ashore at the Pumping Station, as there were development plans for that area.

GD agreed to send a stage report to Cory's. Cory's will then make a stage payment, which will settle Hargreaves' invoice carried out to date. **ACTION: GD**

It was anticipated that the new gates would be ready for installation in July. Some negotiation would be needed concerning the use of our Versadoc, which was scheduled to be used for weed cutting at that time, and was also part of the installation of the gates, floating them across to the lock. If the proposed jetty has been built at Stratford St Mary, for use by the Dedham Vale Boat Operations Group, then the Versadoc currently being used there, could be re-directed.

(b) Flatford Lock

GD reported that Hargreaves had looked at the lower gate, which was leaking and had made suggestions for solving the problem. GD would liaise with DVBOG to ask them to explore these options. JM would also speak to the EA (Gary Cockett) about clearing under the tilting gate, before it was finally lowered to the lock chamber floor. **ACTION:**

**JM and GD**

(c) Dedham Lock

JM reported that he and Kevin Taylor (KT) had met with the Dedham Mill Management Committee (DMMC) regarding the ownership of Dedham Lock and its future.

Discussions were ongoing.

8. Boat Operations – BOM report circulated

Each boat will have a stated capacity in adult heads. Trusty and Rosette can both carry 10 people; Kathleen can carry 6, and FJ 7; Edwardian Lady can carry 14 and John Constable 16. These numbers include crew members. Skippers will need to use discretion if a group of 'larger' sized people seek carriage and may need to reduce numbers. It was agreed that two child tickets can be substituted for one adult, up to a maximum number of passengers as outlined above. A child counts as one passenger. It was agreed that a child ticket would apply to anyone up to the age of 12 years – ie their twelfth birthday.

SBOC – report circulated and accepted, with special mention of their successful recruiting and training programme this season. The cover for JC was now installed.  
DVBOG – no meeting had been held since the last Council meeting.

9. Company Secretary's Report – previously circulated  
This was accepted.

10. Administrator's Report – previously circulated  
SBOC would deal with charters. **ACTION: PB**  
Visitors Books. It had been suggested that boat crews be asked to collect feedback from passengers. It might be possible to put a request for feedback on the back of tickets, and to have a slip for those occasions when tickets were not issued. The tearoom already had a book, which could be displayed more prominently.

11. Membership Report  
This was circulated at the meeting. After a brief discussion, all new members were approved. JM noted that although the income from members was not large, the number of members was often relevant to grant applications.

12. Recent and Forthcoming Events  
St George's Day Event – 23<sup>rd</sup> April, produced good publicity for the Trust. The tearoom reported good business.  
Sudbury Chamber of Commerce Networking meeting. JM gave a short speech on the work of the Trust, then he and CB networked among members on 10 May.  
Katherine's Quay – DK reported on plans for the naming ceremony to be held on 14 May. Formal thanks would be proposed to John Mills, John Morton and Dick Spall for their work in building the quay. Arrangements had been made to mark the occasion. DK was thanked for his work in liaising with the Pearson family for this event.  
Walking Festival – 21 May – CB and DK to liaise on arrangements for this.

13. Correspondence – None

14. Any Other Business

- a. 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations – ideas still being sought. It was suggested that trips on JC, horse drawn, along Friars Meadow, might be good. JR suggested linking it to a family picnic possibly.  
It was noted that 14 August was the date of the signing of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, while the Charity was incorporated on 12 September 1968.
- b. Lock Lintel – a new editor was being sought. Any suggestions should be submitted to CB.
- c. SBOC Facebook page. PB agreed to speak to Andrew Sheldon, who set up the page originally, in order to take over management of the site. **ACTION: PB**
- d. Crew Clothing – CB circulated a spreadsheet of information gathered from the boat crews. Acceptance was proposed by PB, seconded by AT, and agreed by a majority, with some abstentions.
- e. Land at SSM – BF reported on progress to date. It was agreed that he should request that Bates, Wells and Braithwaite hand over all the documentation they

hold to put into Trust archives. He was asked to approach the Trust's solicitors, Sparlings, with regard to the Trust acquiring the land. BF circulated notes on the matter. It was noted that Essex & Suffolk Water did not own the land involved. EB offered to send BF details of the IWA's solicitors. **ACTION: BF, EB**

f. **S2C 2017**

JR had agreed to co-ordinate the event, which would be organised very much on a team work basis this year. It was felt important that the event should be kept running, as it could form an integral part of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations. Some people had already been approached; others would be approached in due course.

**ACTION: JR**

BF suggested that the fee be increased for 2017. After discussion it was agreed that notice be given this year of an increase to £25 per craft for the event in 2018.

g. Lock gates – AT asked for clarification of the Trust's policy on the closure of lock gates, following a conversation he had had with crew from RSBCIC. JM stated that the locks should always be left full for safety reasons, and that for the good of the lock gates, both top and bottom gates should be kept closed when not in use.

h. **ACTION: JM** to talk to RSBCIC.

15. Date, time and venue for next meeting:

**Thursday, 1 June 2017, 7.00 pm at the VEC**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.35 pm.