

Minutes of the River Stour Trust Council
held on Thursday 9 August 2018 at The Granary, Sudbury

Those present: John Morris (JM, in the chair), Emrhys Barrell (EB), Paul Brewerton (PB), Jim Lunn (JL), Norman Ryan (NR), Graham Simmons (GS). Alan Thomas (AT)
Minutes Secretary: Catherine Burrows (CB, RST Administrator)
RST Members: Keith Grinsted (KG)

1. **Apologies received from:** Bob Foster (BF)
2. **Minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2018** (paper previously circulated)
 - A. **Full version of the minutes** – Approved (with item 12a having action owner corrected to MF).
 - B. **Online version of the minutes** – Approved (with Item 13a having only its first sentence retained).
3. **Matters arising from those Minutes of 9 August 2018:**
 - A. **Identification of Confidential Items:** None identified.
 - B. **Follow up on action points:**
 1. **ONGOING** Item 3-b-a, page 1: Cheaper storage option for DVB boats and trailers. **ACTION: Dave Jacketts/Alan Thomas.**
 2. **ONGOING** Item 3-b-b, page 1: Clarification on whether RST rate relief entitlement is affected by proposed RSNC activities. **ACTION: GS**
 3. **ONGOING** Item 3-b-c, page 1: SBOC to appoint representative for Quay Lane Trust. **ACTION: PB**
 4. **RESOLVED.** Item 3-b-e, page 1: Approaching RST members for donations towards the Dedham Lock project. Removed from action list as more progress with project is required.
 5. **RESOLVED.** Item 3-b-h, page 1: Publicity team will share web@riverstourtrust.org as point of contact for people to send photos/stories to feature on RST social media accounts.
 6. **ONGOING.** Item 3-b-m, page 1: **Riverside strip of land at Stratford St Mary opposite Swan Inn.** Progress is being made. **ACTION: AT**
 7. **RESOLVED.** Item 5, page 2, paragraph 2: **Use of funds for RST social events.** This was not initially identified as an action point but will be dealt with under the management restructure.
 8. **ONGOING.** Item 6-a, page 2: **Insurance queries for management of lock usage.** To be discussed under item 5.
 9. **RESOLVED.** Item 6-b, page 2: **Potential use of Ionic Boathouse for our boat operations.** JM advised that National Trust are still in the early stages of planning for this project.
 10. **RESOLVED.** Item 8-c, page 3: **Advising Charities Commission & Companies House of Resolution to amend our MAA as adopted by membership at the AGM.**
 11. **RESOLVED.** Item 11-e, page 4: **A two-tier fee for this year's Sudbury to the Sea (£22 (single person craft) and £27 (for 2 or more people).**
 12. **RESOLVED.** Item 11-e, page 4. **NR to be added to circulation list for RSUG meetings.**
 13. **RESOLVED.** Item 12-a, page 4: **Cattawade rubbish.**
 14. **ONGOING.** Item 13-b, page 4: Small group to develop management restructure to present to Council. **ACTION: GS**

Company Secretary

JM introduced Keith Grinsted (KG) as the potential new Company Secretary. This followed prior emails between the Council and JM's one-to-one meeting with KG. KG presented his background and explained his reluctance to take on the role of Trustee whilst also being Company Secretary; although he would attend the Council/management meetings.

It was **AGREED** to accept Keith Grinsted as the new Company Secretary.

4. Treasurer's Report (previously circulated)

GS presented his report in full. In particular there was some discussion about:

- CIL infrastructure funding opportunity for the Granary. This was led by Babergh District Council and supported by Sudbury Town Council as suggested by the Councillors who had attended the relaunch event on 22 July. However, the deadline for submissions was the end of August 2018 and this did not give much time to prepare and present a well-structured bid document. The possibility of instead putting a forward a bid for Dedham Lock was mooted. Although more information was required on the scope of the bid and the Council's area. It was likely that Dedham would fall under Colchester Borough Council who possibly offer similar funding opportunities. **ACTION: GS, AT, JL, PB to meet with Babergh Officer about a bid for this year.**
- An insurance claim for the theft of leadwork from Granary is being followed up.
- GS gave thanks to everyone for working towards a solution for the weedboat. A provisional sum of £1000 has been set aside for the necessary work to be able complete registration of the boat.
- The potential purchase of a Frolic boat was to be discussed as part of the Projects List.

a) Cash Flow (previously circulated)

At the moment, the data was still being manually entered but Sage will be utilised in the future.

b) Projects List (previously circulated)

- Project 5 (SSM land acquisition): should be a lot less than the £3500 set aside so reduced to £500. AT confirmed that Northumbrian Water are not interested in selling the land because of the location of its underground services so low cost lease/annual license was being discussed.
- Project 7 (VEC): three schemes had been presented since the project was first introduced and these varied in both price and approach. The second scheme (via David Kirkman's contact) had not presented in full due to computer problems. **ACTION: PB to follow up so all schemes could be compared and evaluated.**
- Project 13 (John Constable scheduled maintenance): GS sought clarity on whether the £400 currently set aside was actually sufficient. **ACTION: PB/AT**
- Project 15 (Eden-Rose/RST land swap): JL said that a 999 year lease was being favoured for both parties so only the legal costs related to this would be required.
- Project 16 (Dedham Lock): This project still had no money allocated.
- Project 18 (RST 50th Year): Some of the planned events had not gone ahead so the budget had been reallocated as and when required.

New Schemes for 2018

In particular, the following schemes were mentioned:

- Project 20 (follow on and replacing Project 17, Stop logs housing for Flatford/Roger Brown locks): A provisional allocation of £3000 but funding is not confirmed.
- Project 21 (Boats – potential replacement/major repair of Kathleen and FJ refurbishment): No funds set aside as yet because estimate to be prepared. Although a sum of £500 was added to the FJ refurbishment budget, as previously agreed.
- Project 22 (River dredging and general river maintenance): The dredging of Gasworks Cut was initially put forward because of the Trail Boat Festival. However, this event is postponed until 2019 and this year the low river levels have not impeded the boats reaching Katherine's Quay. The dredging could potentially be part of the CIL funding bid when we more details of its scope are confirmed. £7,500 has been set for the 2019 budget of general river maintenance.
- Project 24 (Evaluation of boat fleet, value for money and programmed maintenance and renewal proposals): This was to consider the next 5 years of operation and whether the boats we currently have satisfy our requirements. Any major costs anticipated that need to be planned for?

- Project 27 (weedcutting operation): The EA sought our weedcutting services on the lower river as well as the upper river. This was to be led predominately by RSNC but a quotation for works could cover costs of the boat refurbishment, a new trailer, labour costs, etc.
- Project 28 (roof repairs to Granary): This followed recent theft of leadwork and subsequent leaking on other areas. (**Post meeting note:** it transpired that leadwork from the entire ridge line had been stolen. All repairs have now been completed with an alternative material used for the ridge line to deter further theft; an insurance claim is being submitted.)
- New Frolic- item 12a brought forward on the agenda- see below.

5. Locks

A. Insurance Question (paper previously circulated)

Kevin Taylor's paper was very clear and it was NOTED that Council expressed their gratitude for all his efforts. The next step was to respond to points A, B, & C at the end of his paper. **ACTION: AT & PB**

B. Roger Brown Lock (AKA Stratford St Mary Lock)

NR was keen to find out more about the seating that was promised by Langham Parish Councillor, Elizabeth Schofield. **ACTION: NR to draft enquiry letter and CB to send to Elizabeth Scofield on his behalf.** There were concerns that the commemorative plaque was missing but it was thought that this had actually been removed to be properly treated. The strimming of the footpath leading to the lock was also queried. **ACTION: DVB to advise on both queries.**

C. Dedham Lock

A fourth contractor has now been approached and they use a method approved by the EA. The Trust have been invited to see their 'silent piling' in action at a location north of Birmingham. It was suggested that the DMMCL expert should also be invited. **ACTION: JM and EB to follow up.**

D. Flatford Lock – Nothing to report.

E. Great Cornard Lock – Nothing to report.

6. Boat Operations

A. Boat Operations Manager (BOM)

FJ has been fully repaired following a recent incident caused by windy weather conditions.

B. Sudbury Boat Operating Committee (SBOC)

Paper previously circulated- nothing further to report.

C. Dedham Vale Boating (DVB) – Nothing to report.

D. John Constable (JC) – Nothing to report.

E. Weedcutting

£1,000 has been allocated and progress is being made to bring the boat into operation for 2019.

7. Company Secretary's Report – overview in Financial Report.

8. Administrator's Report – overview in Financial Report and other items discussed on agenda.

9. Membership Report – All new members were accepted.

10. Recent & Forthcoming Events

A. Sunday 22 July, Formal Re-Opening of Granary Kitchen & Francis J – went very well with lots of people taking advantage of the free boat/discounted boat trips. Good discussion with Sudbury and Babergh Councillors with potential funding opportunities (as discussed in Financial Report).

B. Saturday 11 August, An Evening with Neil Catchpole – 25-30 people currently booked to attend.

- C. Sunday 12 August, Radio Essex – JM has just recently been booked to talk about the Trust love on Sunday morning down at Flatford.
- D. Saturday 18 August, Electric Boat Gathering – Bures Parish Council are very keen and are helping to promote the event.
- E. Saturday 15 & Sunday 16 September, Sudbury to the Sea (S2C) – Bookings are steadily coming in.

11. Correspondence

- A. Damaged bollard near VEC – CB was advised to await further communication. **ACTION: CB & KG.**
- B. EA River Visit Survey – JM is liaising with interested parties and CB has already assisted Matt Yallop with boat storage requirements.
- C. St. Peter's Promotion Opportunity – Paper circulated for info ration only. Nothing further to report at this time.
- D. Tree near Corporal Lillie Close – This was on land not owned by the Trust and this had been conveyed to the solicitors.

12. Any Other Business

A. New Frolic

There had been emails circulating before the meeting and JM read out EB's proposal regarding the potential purchase of a new Frolic. The DVB group had expressed an interest as a means of expanding the boat trips on offer although more volunteers were needed for this to be viable. A 'spare' Frolic was suggested as beneficial should the need arise for a replacement boat at either end of the river. For example, Stour Trusty II has a leak and should she be unable to operate for a month then this was a potential loss of £400 per day.

Extract from EB's email:

Ian and I have looked at the boat again. The motor runs, but the controller is very old and intermittent. The hull is good and the topsides have just been professionally repainted navy blue, and the hull antifouled. We will go ahead and bring the controller up to the same standard as the other Trust Frolics with new controller, contactors and throttle. Cost of parts £300. We would have to do this with any Frolic that we bought if we want them all to have modern replaceable controllers. Batteries are shot, but again we would want to fit new gel batteries anyway, so £1450 including a new charger for 10 years life. Sidescreens are good and just need cleaning. Secondhand trailer with new brakes and bearings. £700. Cushion bases are missing, but the backs are still there. Short term fix would be three waterproof garden seat cushions, £75. Long term full set £700. Cost of boat £3,000. So total £5,500 to get it operational plus full set of cushions if we really need them. Compared to £15,000 to get any other secondhand Frolic up to this standard.

GS explained that the cashflow suggested that the Trust was on target for a surplus of £20,000 but it was imperative that money is set aside for the reserve fund and 2019 Projects. The intention was to set aside £1,000 per month into the third bank account (currently circa £4,000 balance) and build the reserves as required by the Charities Commission. The boat purchase (see pricing below) would mean that one or more of the current schemes would need to be dropped. Although a couple of the 2018 projects have decreased in their funding requirements the 2019 projects need access to the remaining 2018 surplus. The Trust needs £8,000 per month in order to cover its basic running costs.

Nonetheless, the overriding consensus was that the Trust should purchase the Frolic. Its favourable pricing and the potential to utilise it at either end of the river or perhaps introduce electric boating at Bures in the near future was felt to be too good an opportunity to miss.

ACTION: Purchase boat and inform insurers.

EB added that the repeal of the byelaw is paramount and our boats have operated on the river without incident or complaint for a number of years. He believed that the Environment Agency would be quicker to accept an argument for another Frolic boat on the river rather than a larger 12-seater boat.

It was NOTED that Council formally thanked EB for helping the Trust to acquire this asset.

- B. Anglian Adventures Planning Application – The deadline for comments had passed so the paper was for information only.
- C. VEC Ramp Proposal – discussed under item 5b, Project 7.
- D. Marketing – NR reported on his recent visits and follow up emails to The Henny Swan and Rushbanks Farm Campsite. Despite his optimism neither party was keen to place an advert in Lock Lintel. It was suggested that a donation to the charity with the bonus of an advert might be looked upon more favourably.
- E. River Clearance at Nayland – NR has spoken with Ian Watts who has informed him that oxygen levels are too low for weedcutting. However, a tree across the river is due to be removed 12-15 August.
- F. First Aid Kits – JL has updated all kits (expiry date August 2022).

13. Date of Next Meeting – Thursday 20 September, 7pm at Grove House, Dedham
Apologies: AT

MEETING CLOSED at 21:55

DRAFT