

**Minutes of the River Stour Trust Council
held on Thursday 15 November 2018 at Dedham**

Those present: John Morris (JM), Emrhys Barrell (EB), Paul Brewerton (PB), Bob Foster (BF), Keith Grinstead (KG), Jim Lunn (JL), Graham Simmons (GS), Alan Thomas (AT)

Minutes Secretary: Catherine Burrows (CB, RST Administrator)

RST Members: Mike Finch (MF)

1. Apologies received: N/A

2. Declaration of Interests (DoI)– Nearly all the forms has been submitted to KG. No-one declared any DoI.

3. Minutes of the meetings held on:

A. 9 August 2018:

- i. Full file version APPROVED.
- ii. Online version APPROVED.

B. 18 October 2018:

- i. Full file version APPROVED with minor amendments as follows:
 - Item 3-b-iii (page 1): Action attributed to PB and AT.
 - Item 5-b-ii (page 4): Correct the date to 15.11.18.
 - Item 6-c (Page 4): Correct event description as 'meal' instead of 'curry night'.
- ii. Online version APPROVED with amendments as above and as follows:
 - Item 1 (page 1): Sentence to be redacted to read: 'The Council was informed that NR had sadly chosen to resign from the Council'.

4. Matters arising from those Minutes of 18 October 2018:

- i. RESOLVED. NR Resignation (18.10.18, Item 1, page 1): JM had established that NR's resignation applied to being a Trustee and a member.
- ii. ONGOING. Trust Restructure/Update (20.09.18, item 2, page 1): Restructuring Group updating the Trust's Memorandum & Article of Association (MAA), operational structure and researching the Trust switching to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. All to be committed to a timeline for the membership to vote on the proposed changes at the 2019 AGM. ACTION: Restructuring Group.
- iii. ONGOING. Weedcutting (20.09.18, item 2, page 1): RST and RSNC working group to be formed in order to discuss issues and next steps. ACTION: PB/AT
- iv. RESCINDED. DVB Boat Storage (09.08.18, Item 3-b-a, page 1): Alternatives are being researched.
- v. RESCINDED. RSNC & Rate Relief (09.08.18, Item 3-b-b, page 1): No immediate need to seek clarification on whether RST rate relief entitlement is affected by proposed RSNC activities.
- vi. ONGOING Quay Lane Trust Representative (09.08.18, Item 3-b-c, page 1): SBOC to appoint. ACTION: PB
- vii. RESOLVED. Riverside strip of land at Stratford St Mary opposite Swan Inn (09.08.18, Item 3-b-m, page 1): AT reported a £1 per annum charge would be payable (if requested) for use of the land for manually propelled and electric powered craft only. There is no issue with RST running a boat trip operation from the land and utilising it for events, such as S2C. It was NOTED that RST is very grateful for all Northumbrian Water's assistance.
- viii. ONGOING. Boats 5-Year Maintenance Plan (09.08.18, Item 4-b, page 2, Project 13): This had been submitted but would benefit from further examination and discussion between AT, PB and GS in order to finalise budgets and cash provision.
- ix. ONGOING. Lock Usage (09.08.18, Item 5-a, page 3): Prior to enabling extension to our insurance cover for lock usage, we must respond to points regarding training (refer to a, b & c at the end KT's document 'RST Insurance Question' as circulated for August Council meeting). ACTION: AT & PB
- x. RESOLVED. Lock Plaque (09.08.18, Item 5-b, page 3): It had simply been removed for treatment.
- xi. RESOLVED. Silent Piling (09.08.18, Item 5-c, page 3): EB had been a spectator and reported that the method should work well for Dedham since no vibrations were evident. If contracted to carry out the work then a sample piling exercise can be carried out but would need to be paid for if the contract was subsequently cancelled.
- xii. RESOLVED. Declaration of Interests (20.09.18, Item 4-l, page 3): This has been circulated to Trustees.
- xiii. RESOLVED. Dedham Fundraising (20.09.18, Item 5-ii, page 3): This is a permanent agenda item.
- xiv. RESOLVED. Land upkeep (20.09.18, Item 5-iii, page 3): DVB and SBOC to manage upkeep of Trust land/structures falling within their operational stretches.
- xv. RESOLVED. Thank You Letter to Outdoor Hire Centre (20.09.18, item 6-e, page 4).
- xvi. RESOLVED. Election of new Chair (20.09.18, Item 7-b, page 4): On the agenda- refer to Item 5.
- xvii. RESOLVED. Thank You Letter to Morton Family (20.09.18, Item 7-c, page 4).
- xviii. RESOLVED. Maria Constable Naming Ceremony (20.09.18, Item 5-b-l, page 4): SCC Councillor, Christopher Hudson, formally named our new boat, Maria Constable. Coverage in Essex and Suffolk newspapers is expected. The National Trust (NT) and Flatford Field Studies Centre were very interested

in the event. JM mentioned that NT always mention Maria Constable as part of their walkabouts so the naming of the boat is very apt from their perspective too.

5. Chair of Council

JM asked for nominations. PROPOSED AT/SECONDED GS that 'Paul Brewerton be elected as the new Chair of Council' AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.

PB gave his sincere thanks to the outgoing Chair for all his work and hoped that JM would consider staying on Council.

6. Company Secretary – VEC Rebuild Update

KG had previously emailed his account of the recent meeting with the Loss Adjuster, Building Surveyor and Structural Engineer. KG and GS were very pleased to report that the meeting had gone very well and there was definitely a synergy between what the Trust would hope to change and what has to change because of new building regulations. Although, some felt that independent professionals should be sought, it was pointed out that a significant fee cost applies and the value of the building and the work required had to be considered. The Trust's proposed changes/modifications were being looked upon favourably e.g. disabled access ramp, internal stairs to back foyer, external fire escape from upstairs). Also, changes in building regulations would compel changes i.e. the overhanging veranda roof is no longer compliant and has to be reduced in size. Rebuild plans were expected in mid-December and it recommended that these be analysed for discussion at the January meeting. In the meantime, KG intends to enquire whether planning permission could be required.

7. Treasurer / Administrator Update

The Treasurer/Administrator reports were being combined since there was so much overlap anyway.

GS presented his report that reinforced the information from his previous reports. It was pointed out that for operational and cashflow reasons we need to be able to finance our operation to Easter 2019 as monthly income always drops during the winter months. The reserves fund is also being maintained by setting aside £1,000 per month. Based upon current expenditure and forecasted limited income over the winter months, by Easter the Trust should have a surplus of around £20,000 to effectively carry forward for planned works and maintenance in 2019. However, this also assumes a satisfactory negotiation of insurance regarding the VEC fire.

The Cashflow spreadsheet gives an overview of our various activities to assist with preparing 2019 budgets. Mike Finch expressed concern that the River Stour Navigation Company showed expenditure although it had not undertaken any activity. Also, where are craft storage charges on the cashflow? **ACTION: CB to look into.**

It was pointed out that our more weather dependent activities had benefited from exceptionally prolonged good weather and all teams, particularly the tea room, had exceeded their forecasted income. However, it was imperative that grants are sought because the Trust is so reliant on these operations for its income. It is hoped to meet with our Independent Examiner to discuss reworking the formal accounts so they are more understandable e.g. grants for the lock restorations were unintentionally 'hidden' under Plants and Machinery.

The issue of privately-owned craft stored at the VEC was raised as we expect site access to be restricted (very likely prohibited) once the building work commences. It was agreed that the site be cleared as much as possible. **ACTION: CB to contact craft owners.**

Members – all new members were accepted.

8. Operations – boats and locks

A. Dedham Lock Fundraising (paper circulated)

Enovert had turned down the initial £85k application but a reduced £55k application is being submitted before 07.12.18. The reduced bid figure will be explained as RST volunteers having stepped up their fundraising this year to make up the shortfall, and will continue to do so next year, helped by our new boat paid for by a Suffolk County Council grant.

We need to find 10% matched funding and the EA have already pledged £8,500 (as 10% of the original £85,000 application). Additional funding to be sought from our revenue, other funding sources and an appeal to our members. EB's paper also noted that funding sources are likely to require that the Trust demonstrate ownership or a long-term lease of the lock. The works to repair and protect the lock island from erosion is an additional cost in the region of £18,000.

B. Constable Trail (paper circulated)

EB suggested launching the 'Constable Trail' that links the sites of all of Constable's best-known paintings. People can travel by foot, by car, by trip-boat or by canoe and visit all of the locations. At present there are at least 12 of his paintings that are of the stretch from Flatford to Stratford St Mary. A guide to be produced in digital format initially and inviting councils to contribute to its publication. It can then be used as a key component of our approach to all the councils to suggest contributions can be at every level, from printing of the guide for £1000 to

repairing the locks for £40,000. EB offered to attend the forthcoming LEADER meeting in order to represent the Trust and present the Constable Trail idea.

9. Events

- A. **Shanty, Cheese & Wine Evening, Friday 16 November, 7pm at The Granary** – this had exceeded all expectations and a profit was expected to be shared with the Royal British Legion.
- B. **Santa Boat Rides, Sunday 16 December** – promoted only via Facebook and the 4 time slots are already nearly fully booked.
- C. **Maria Constable Naming Ceremony, 14 November 2018** – discussed under Matters Arising.
- D. **SBOC Laying Up Meal, TBA February 2019**

10. Any Other Business - redacted

11. Proposed Next Meetings

Thursday 17 January, 10:00am at Dedham

Monday 11 March, 10:00am at venue TBA

MEETING CLOSED at 11.31