

**Minutes of the River Stour Trust Council**  
**held on Monday 11 March 2019 at The Granary, Sudbury**

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

Minutes Secretary: Catherine Burrows (CB, RST Administrator)

RST Members: Mike Finch (MF), Kevin Taylor (KT)

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Emrhys Barrell (EB)
2. **Declaration of Interests (DoI)** – KG re: Backhouse solicitors.
3. **Minutes of the meetings held on 30 January 2019:**
  - i. Full file version - APPROVED with below amendment:
    - Item 9B, page 3 – in the first sentence replace ‘...was set up in order...’ with ‘...could be used...’
  - ii. Online version - APPROVED with amendments (as above and below):
    - Item 7A, page 2: Redact last two sentences.
    - Item 9B, page 3: Redact item in its entirety.
4. **Matters arising from those Minutes of 30 January 2018:**
  - i. **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.**
  - ii. **RESCINDED.** Weedcutting (20.09.18, item 2, page 1): RST and RSNC working group to be formed in order to discuss issues and next steps.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**
  - iii. **RESOLVED.** 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 of KT’s document ‘RST Insurance Question’ as circulated for August Council meeting). A training record and risk assessment is being formulated. **ACTION: AT & PB**
  - iv. **ONGOING.** VEC building works (30.01.19, item 5, page 1): KG is repeatedly chasing the draft surveyor’s proposals before being able to liaise with BMCA about access for contractors/site traffic. **ACTION: KG**
  - v. **RESOLVED.** Website amendments and RST representation issues (30.11.19, item 6, page 2).
  - vi. **RESOLVED.** Acceptance of grant and contractor offer (30.01.19, item 7A, page 2-3): Please note: on the proviso that remaining funds are raised separately from general income.
  - vii. **RESOLVED.** Meeting with DMMC to finalise Heads of Agreement regarding lease terms. (30.01.19, item 7A, page 2-3).
  - viii. **RESOLVED.** ID badges and Emergency contact details. (30.01.19, item 7C, page 3).
  - ix. **ONGOING.** Weedcutting (30.01.19, item 9B, page 3): **ACTION: CB and GS.**
5. **Treasurer/Administrator update**

GS presented his report alongside the circulated cashflow spreadsheets. There will be some amendments to the format of the 2019 reports.

  - Our operational activity, including staffing costs and general overheads, have been grouped together to provide a more accurate figure which relates to the cost of running the RST. This activity is supported by our primary Main bank account.

- The second section pulls together our Planned Works activity along with Grants/Donations and is generally funded from our second bank account (formerly known as Special Projects now renamed Planned Projects).
- The third section caters for activity that is below the line activity. In other words, activity such as developing a reserve fund or monies owed to or from statutory bodies that cannot be used for general day to day activity. This is supported by our third bank account (formerly known as Lock and Navigation Account now renamed as Reserves).

It was stressed that a register/record of projects and associated decisions and financial activity pertaining to these was of the utmost importance.

We already have a wish list for the Planned/Programmed works schedule (refer to Appendix 3 of the circulated report). The majority of the projects are not funded and not all requests can be accommodated. There is no provision for additional work/alterations at the VEC and no further direct RST funds for the proposed Dedham Lock refurbishment.

In general terms, income targets are similar to 2018 targets but with a small uplift of 5%. This recognises the increasing difficulty we have with finding sufficient volunteers to adequately cover current operations and perhaps achievable. There is no new operational budget to support the Navigation Company development nor start up monies for weed cutting etc.

CB referred to her report which included VEC craft storage update, VEC site security, office updates, recent meeting with National Trust and Granary Bar operation. The bar commission figures were circulated and following discussion of the various pros and cons it was AGREED to bring the Granary Bar operation in house.

## **6. VEC / Governance**

KG gave a brief update on VEC progress which was ongoing.

## **7. Operations – boats and locks**

### **A. Dedham Lock Fundraising / Lease Negotiations**

KT gave an update on recent meeting with DMMCL. There was some discussion on their request for a letterbox design (to replace the tilting gate) to allay fears of flooding. It was NOTED that this will not prevent flooding and the EA had evidence that could be made available again to DMMCL.

The change of solicitor was a very positive step forward and our previous solicitors had not responded. Their charges were reasonable and took into account the Trust's charitable status and requirements.

EB had sent a report over the weekend but this had not been received by everyone and it also meant printed copies were unavailable. It was AGREED that a small RST working group (KT, JM, EB, CB) liaise to ensure all information (technical, legal and financial) is discussed and then KT and JM can maintain our relationship with DMMCL.

AT was liaising with EB (regarding his Enover submission) in order to apply for additional funding for the project (lock gates and island repairs) via applications to Heritage Lottery Fund and Sport England (via Colchester Borough Council). There was also a letter of interest to Active Essex relating to the Constable Trail. It was pointed out that a coordinated approach to funding was required alongside a risk analysis. Various bids could depend on the success of each other as well as an expectation of RST covering certain elements without specific funding being set aside. We should be fully aware of applications and their implications. For example, the Enover grant was accepted but the lease is still to be finalised and the gates are to be manufactured but what are the specific arrangements with Hargreaves regarding their storage?

## B. SBOC

It was NOTED that Council recorded its thanks to John Mills, John Kemp and Dick Spall for their work in extending the jetty at The Granary.

At some point during the summer, the barn currently used to store the boats and trailers will no longer be available. There is a possibility of a smaller barn for the trailers only but it needed a door and better security. ACTION: SBOC.

## C. DVB

Maria Constable needs further work to her steering but the other boats to be launched within the next few weeks.

DVB are in talks with National Trust at Flatford regarding possible moorings and storage options.

Jax Horswill had been in touch as she had not submitted invoices for 2017 and 2018 storage. It was AGREED to pay these once invoices were received.

## 8. Events

- a) Sudbury Boat Trip & Granary Tea Room – new season commences Sunday 31 March
- b) Confluent launch, The Granary, Sunday 31 March, 2pm – art installation (Granary and boats) and audio podcasts to be unveiled
- c) Sudbury to the Sea, 14 & 15 September – still no organiser (PB has prepared a brief message to be sent to membership via email)

## 9. Any Other Business – matters previously notified to office or chair

- a) Red Wheel Scheme, Flatford Lock – Council was pleased to accept this and JM suggested a simple brick column to mount the plaque. ACTION: JM to determine permissions needed and oversee installation.
- b) Volunteer data – a member had asked about the security of their data. It was confirmed that personal information should be sent directly to the office. Folders had been retrieved from the VEC and were safely stored in the new office location. The storage of the remaining paperwork at the VEC was discussed as there were concerns that it could be degrading due to dampness. ACTION: KG and CB

## 10. Proposed date of next meetings

- a) Mon 15 April, 10:00 – Pre-AGM Planning Meeting, Granary
- b) Wed 8 May, 10:00-12:00, venue TBA
- c) Fri 28 June – AGM
- d) Thur 11 July, 10:00-12:00, venue TBA

**MEETING CLOSED at 12.48**