

River Stour Trust Council

Meeting (virtual via Zoom) Monday 13th December 2021. The meeting was recorded.

11.00 am

Minutes

1. Present: P. Brewerton, C. Burrows, S. Durham, E. Barrell, J. Lunn, J. Parkinson, J. Rogers, M. Finch.
2. Apologies for absence – Lisa King apologised for not being able to get to the office this month, so there was no point in her attending the meeting.
3. Election of Chairman. In accordance with the Constitution, the Chairman stood down at the AGM on 18th November so a new Chairperson has to be elected. JR proposed Paul Brewerton be re-elected Chairman, seconded JP, and this was passed unanimously.
4. Minutes of last meeting – agreed, but with extra details about two of the subjects discussed:

Flatford electricity supply. It was agreed at the November 15th meeting that getting a reliable and safe 240V power supply on the Flatford Lock Island was vital if we are to avoid situations such as occurred this year when we could not get boats down from Dedham due to Fen Bridge being closed. If necessary to achieve this, Council agreed that we should employ a contractor to re-connect the cables already in place and provide a secure supply.

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5. EB made the point that ordinary members of the Trust are allowed to attend Council meetings, and that in the interests of gaining new council members, we should promote this fact. It was agreed that this fact should be given more prominence on the website, and that we should then invite any interested members to join the Zoom meeting, and if they wish, to address the meeting before formal business starts.
6. Matters Arising. The dredging at Cornard has been going ahead.
EB offered to take over writing the minutes in the future, which was accepted.
7. Reports
 - a) Financial. CB presented the P&L report and bank balances for the month. It was agreed that possibly we do not need Lisa to attend with the overview more than quarterly.
The bank signatories and mandates have been updated.
The River Stour Navigation Company account has been renewed.
 - b) SBOC . The Santa Cruises were very successful and fully booked, and raised several thousands of pounds. Thanks to all who assisted in making them successful. A very nice Thankyou email had been received from one family who took part.

Winter boat maintenance was underway. EB said the props should be turned every now and then to stop the motor brushes sticking.

c) DVB. MF made a point of thanking everyone who has made the AGM a success, which was echoed.

Fen Bridge progress has been delayed due to soft ground.

DVB members had been to investigate what needs doing at Flatford to establish the electricity supply. It was agreed we need to first check continuity of the cable, but then we need to employ a contractor to provide a safe secure supply. SD agreed to progress this.

d) Dedham Lock. PB and Kevin Taylor had met two DMMCL directors and discussed providing them with drafts of the Lease and Licence. EB said we have now written into the Lease that we require safe landing points upstream and downstream. He also sent round pictures of the area round the downstream jetty. He also said that Essex CC have confirmed they are responsible for maintaining the footpath that passes over the lock, including the bridge and steps.

e) Granary. Matters are proceeding regarding the upgrading the fire escape.

8. Health & Safety. SD had produced a report on Chainsaw Safety. This was discussed at length, together with the general subject of tree cutting, removal and pruning. It was agreed that all RST operators of chainsaws should be trained and qualified. Also the necessary safety clothing should be bought by the Trust, and worn by anyone using a chainsaw. SD and JP agreed to investigate how suitable training can be set up and recorded. JR said we need to check that our insurance covers Trust members using chainsaws. CB read out the relevant clauses in our policy that show we have notified our insurers that some Trust members use chainsaws. EB suggested we approach Waterways Recovery Group to ask them what procedures they use for training and certification. EB agreed with SD's suggestion in his report that we look towards finding contractors who could take over this work when our own volunteers become too old. It was agreed to adopt SD's overall report on Chainsaw Safety.

EB made the point that the Trust needs to establish a Hard Hat policy, for all our activities not just tree work, which was also agreed.

PB said that the EA have now established a desk in the VEC for their waterway officer. The question of what would be a reasonable rent to charge for this was discussed.

9. Environmental. SD explained that the Manningtree Rotary have set up a table-top style information board on the river bank between Flatford Bridge and the Lock, which also includes the RST logo.

EB gave some more information on the general RST signboard he is suggesting and asked for people's responses so we can move forward with this.

JL said that we have been approached by a fisherman who says that he has been advised by someone purporting to be a fisheries officer claiming that RST has

no rights over Gasworks Cut regarding fishing. It was agreed that JL should pursue this matter.

10. Lock Lintel. In progress

11. AOB JR asked that members are given more time to read and absorb lengthy papers. It was agreed that since we are having monthly meetings not bi-monthly we can sometimes put off non-urgent matters.

JP raised the question of a possible temporary mooring for a Frolic at Flatford on the basis that Fen Bridge may still be closed off next year, which was discussed.

JR and CB made the point that we need to have an overall five-year plan in place, plus a one-year plan for events.

12. Date and time of next meeting. 17th January 2022. 11 am via Zoom.