

River Stour Trust Council Meeting (virtual via Zoom) Tuesday 20th September 2022.

The meeting was recorded.

7.30 pm

Minutes

Present: Paul Brewerton, Emrhys Barrell, Catherine Burrows, Steve Durham, Lisa King .

1. **Apologies for absence**, James Parkinson, Mike Finch.
2. **Minutes of last meeting**. Approved.
3. **Matters arising** Nothing that was not covered later.

4. Reports

Financial LK confirmed the work boat MF donated was in the annual accounts as a £1800 donation. Resignations of Trustees thorough the year have also been included. The accounts were approved and signed.

AGM Wednesday 2nd November 7.30. It was agreed the Zoom format works well. It was agreed we should send out an appeal to the membership for new Trustees, to be included with the AGM papers. EB agreed to write this.

Manager's Report. No

SBOC Work on JC is continuing. Brian Kennel has been very helpful with advice. We may decide to keep her out of the water till next Spring, but will take Brian's advice on this. Charters and trips still going very well, booked up till mid October. Still looking for winter boat storage, which is becoming urgent. Three crew members upgraded to skipper

DVB DVB Commmitte met on 14th. £33k income so far this year. Some vandalism on Kathleen at Talbooth due to rowdy party goers at the hotel. Lower river still weeded up. Will continue operations till after the October half-term. Five new skippers, and more on the way. Fen Bridge replaced today. EA opened the salt water sluices at Judas Gap to try and flush out the surface weed, but not very successfully. EB suggested we should officially ask the EA what success they have had with weed control and increasing the oxygen levels. PB to write.

S2C 150 craft this year compared to 300 previously. Some dropped out due to poor conditions of river with weeds and trees, plus struggling round some of the portages – weeds and brambles. Some was a sign of difficult economic conditions. We were

down on numbers of volunteers from the Membership which increased pressure on the whole operation. One entrant suffered from what was thought to be a stroke, but was treated by Jim Lunn and members before the medics arrived, for which he was subsequently very grateful. This shows the importance of the training in First Aid that all our members undertake. The reduced numbers made the whole event much easier to manage, which prompts the thought that we should in future restrict the numbers to 200 or 250 craft.

CB suggested we should revive the Lengthsman Scheme, to get regular reports from the whole length of the river. Especially we should get canoeists to give us reports on the whole of the river, instead of just the stretches we run boats on. We already get input from general river users who find it difficult to get in touch with the EA. We should reach out to general users throughout the whole of the year.

Dedham Lock Lock Cottage is now on the market inviting offers above £1m. The boundary with Lock Cottage has now been agreed and marked with a picket fence with gates. The Lease is very close to being agreed, with a DMMCL meeting due on 10th October. EB pointed out that work will not be able to start this year due to the weather closing in, even when the Lease is signed, plus costs are going up rapidly, caused by the delays, meaning we will have a shortfall in grant funding. Plus the new gates are drying out, which means we may decide to put them into the river, so they take up water.

5 Health & Safety Low water levels causing some problems with passengers struggling to get out of the boats onto the pontoon.

6. Environmental. No report

7. Lock Lintel has now been taken on by Catherine and Michelle.

8 AOB.. SD would like to purchase a new pole-saw for tree lopping, and suggests a battery-powered version would be best. Agreed.

A laying up lunch has been agreed for the end of October, to be open to all members.

Next Meeting. Monday 17th October, 7.30.