

River Stour Trust Council Meeting
Tuesday 23 May 2023 at 1:30pm
[virtual via Zoom - meeting was recorded]

Present - Trustees: Richard Blay (RB), Paul Brewerton (PB), Steve Durham (SD), Maggie Gardner (MG), Jane Rogers (JR)

Others: Catherine Burrows (CB)

1. **Apologies for absence:** Emrhys Barrell (EB), Alan Ryan (AR), Lisa King (LK - accountant), Jim Lunn (JL).
2. **Minutes of last meeting:** It was **AGREED** to accept the minutes with no redactions identified for the online version.
3. **Matters Arising:** as tabled on Agenda.

a) PB shared the sad news that one of our volunteers, Derek Cresswell, had passed away last week. He had managed maintenance of the VEC grounds for many years. His funeral and wake take place on 8th June with a number of RST members intending to attend. After a short break, his wife, Margaret Cresswell, would like to return to the voluntary role of Tea Room Manager.

4. Appointment of Boat Operations Manager (BOM)/Deputy BOM

JL has stood down, certainly in the short term and likely in the long term, due to personal health matters and everyone wished him well. It is an IWA Certificate of Boat Management Scheme requirement that we have a BOM i.e. qualified person (e.g. holder of RYA Inland Helmsman's Certificate or other higher qualification) with a minimum of two seasons practical experience as a Small Passenger Boat Steerer. The role involves responsibility for the day-to-day operation of our boat operations. MG suggested Graham Gardner as a suitable candidate to approach.

5. Reports

a) **Financial** (P&L report circulated) – It was hoped that income would increase next month, with the expectation of improved weather conditions and river levels. There was a query regarding the year-to-date costs for Boat Operations and it was noted that this section currently included River Maintenance. SD has drafted an Expenses Policy that will be presented to DVB for initial feedback. The policy encompassed tax rules, mileage, uniform, etc.

b) Management

- i. **Weedcutting** – Andrew Sheldon had contacted Jeff Burroughs who was unable to take over weedcutting operations on behalf of RST but offered to train willing volunteers.
- ii. **Boat Registrations** –CB and SD to liaise on the issue of registering Annabelle Rose and Wendy.
- iii. The CPD (Continuing Professional Development) for all skippers and crew is now set up but needs someone to manage it.

c) **Membership** – No report.

d) SBOC

i. John Constable – PB was liaising with EB and summarised the situation to those present. After JC's relaunch, the bilge pump was reinstalled and connected to the mains power. Over the Easter weekend, when the building and boat were both unattended the mains power to the VEC tripped out. The bilge pump was working but due to the mains failure the battery ran out and the bilge pump stopped working, allowing about 12 inches of water to enter the boat and flood the batteries and other electrical components. Action was taken on Tuesday after the bank holiday to pump out the flood water using

several submersible pumps and both motors ran to check for water damage. Daily checks, the installation of a second submersible bilge pump and filling of holes (with sawdust to reduce water intake) offered extra reassurance. The boat remained at its mooring awaiting long-standing electrical works, by a specialist electrician, who discovered corrosion had affected the electronic controllers and the motors would no longer run. No further work was carried out at so insurance assessors could see the extent of the damage.

There was some discussion about concerns on what costs would be covered, how long the insurance process could take and the ongoing viability of JC.

e) DVB

- i. Varying water levels have been problematic AR had spoken to FSC who maintain that NT should be controlling the sluices. FSC lease the land from NT and a lack of coordination between the two parties is an issue.

- f) **Dedham Lock** – Those present sent best wishes to EB who will be hospitalised for months after surgery and cannot continue in the role of Project Manager. The role would be ideally suited to someone familiar with civil contract projects and knowledgeable in procurement. It was hoped that the project team will include those, such as Kevin Taylor and Mike Finch, who have been involved with the project. **ACTION:** Council gives SD and AR authority to choose members of the project team.

- g) **River Maintenance** – Emails on progress have previously been circulated.

6. **Health & Safety** – It was noted that the new crotch straps will not fit the old Baltic 150's until the old buckle is removed.

7. **Environmental** – no report.

8. **Member Communications** – A volunteer was needed to put together the next newsletter for June/July.

9. AOB

a) **Willow in Gasworks Cut** –

b) **Granary Fire Exit & decking** – Further discussion on this project was needed with a further survey required to check the pilings (not possible in the initial January visit). **ACTION:** PB, CB and JR.

10. **Next meeting:** Tuesday 4 July 2023, 9:45am