

River Stour Trust Council Meeting
Tuesday 2nd July 2024 at 2:00pm
[virtual via Zoom - meeting was recorded]

Present - Trustees: Emrhys Barrell (EB), Paul Brewerton (PB – Chairman of Council), Steve Durham (SD), Maggie Gardner (MG – Company Secretary), Hilary Gallo (HG - Treasurer), Jim Lunn (JL), Jane Rogers (JR), Alan Ryan (AR)

Others: Catherine Burrows (CB), Sharon Quinn and N. Williamson

1. **Apologies for absence:** Kevin Taylor (KT)

2. **Minutes of last meeting**

Correction of word - from 'bust' to 'busy' (item 4b)

It was **AGREED** to accept the 20.05.24 Council minutes as a true record of that meeting, subject to the correction, without redactions for the online version.

3. **Matters Arising:** as tabled on Agenda.

a) **Boxted Bridge ongoing closure of navigation**

PB reported no further update from Essex Highways (EH) since their 31.05.24 email stating: "The design of the portages has been commissioned and is currently underway. Following that permission will be sought from the landowners for the installation of the portages. An assessment re-review is currently being undertaken to review the findings of the previous assessment while taking into consideration the current condition of the structure."

PB had today sent a follow up email to EH, EA and local Councillors stressing that S2C was due to take place on 14th-15th September. We know that the event cannot be approved by the EA until an alternative portage route is in place. CB pointed out that it is also mid-July when we would want to be open for S2C bookings. There are some new EA contacts in post, so it was hoped that this might help expediate matters. **ACTION:** CB to liaise with current EA team.

b) **DVB Assessor**

It is necessary to arrange IWA's Andrew Phasey to visit and assess KT so he can replace Ian Whale as DVB Assessor. **ACTION:** KT and JL to liaise.

4. **AGM Preparation**

PB suggested AGM to be held at The Granary on Thursday 15th August at 7:30pm. **ACTION:** CB and PB to meet and determine who needs to stand for re-election. CB to prepare documents and send to membership.

5. **Reports**

a) **Financial/management**

- HG provided bank balances (as at 28.06.24): Main £99,217.53, Reserves £106,268.37, Projects £49,691.68
- HG queried the type and breadth of information trustees would like provided in the future. It was requested that his report included an overview of profit and loss with a reference to the previous year.
- It was **AGREED** to pay off the remaining BBL loan balance of £12,000 and save approx. £600 interest charges.
- It was confirmed that Garfield Weston £15,000 grant had been received but not yet acknowledged.
- Granary fire exit replacement application is still in progress. The plans will include future provision for a lift.
- CB on annual leave W/C 5th August.

b) Membership

- CB circulated list of members requiring formal approval by the Council. Any membership requiring discussion to be raised and discussed at the next meeting.
- CB asked whether a newsletter was going to be prepared as there has been no general membership communication since the Spring 2023 Newsletter.

c) SBOC

- JC has been relocated to The Granary.
- Wendy has been removed from the water for maintenance and significant holes have been discovered. Phillips Engineering has quoted £1300 to repair. The expense was **APPROVED**.

d) DVB

- There are problematic riverbank breaches (2 major and 2 minor) on the Flatford-Dedham stretch. AR has spoken to the landowner, EA, local Council and Suffolk County Council. The latter think the river level should be lower which is a misunderstanding of the navigation requirements.
- Trusty is running aground more frequently which puts into question the use of MC on this stretch. She tilts at the stern although ballast has been added and there are concerns that the new propellor shaft will be damaged. It was suggested that Rosette and MC are swapped since the former is more similar to Trusty. **ACTION:** SBOC and DVB to liaise.

e) Dedham Lock

- The Versadock has been reconfigured in preparation for its use during the project following the permit being granted.
- The contract between RST and Green Oak Carpentry (GOC) is being finalised.
- GOC Risk Assessments and Method Statements have been provided but SD has sent back comments.
- Colchester Council has approved use of the car park for the welfare station without a charge.

f) River Maintenance Group

- Brantham Parish Council grant of £5,000 for the Cattawade site improvements has been successful.
- HG to monitor and manage ongoing RMG expenses.

6. Health & Safety – no report.

7. Environmental

Low river levels and riverbank breaches.

8. AOB

- a) Boat Operations Manager** – JL has undertaken to be a 'placeholder' as small boat operations scheme required a BOM although requirements of the scheme are still being met. The BOM description and tasks are to be rewritten and it was also suggested that SBO and DVB 'deputies' would be a useful addition.
- b) RMG New Members** – it was good news that new volunteers have joined the team. They do need to be RST members (particularly for insurance purposes) and emergency contacts should also be provided for all volunteers.

9. Next meeting: Thursday 1st August 2024, 2pm – via Zoom