

Minutes of the meeting of the board of directors held at Island House, Moor Road, Chesham at 10.00 a.m. on Thursday 5th December 2013.

Present: Roy Chandler (chairman), David Carrington, Colin Edmond, Neil Edwards, Jim Jenkins, Peter Martin and John Pomfret.

In Attendance: Graham Brown.

There were no apologies for absence.

Minutes of Meetings

1. The minutes of the board meeting held on 23rd September 2013, which had been circulated prior to the meeting, including the edited minutes for publication, were approved as a true record of that meeting.

Health and Safety

2. (a) Roy Chandler reported there had been an incident on the October WRG Canal Camp, in which a dumper truck had slid from the towpath into the Navigation. [Confidential discussion].
- (b) [Confidential item]
- (c) Roy Chandler reported that new method statements had been put in place for operation of the crane following the incident reported at the June meeting. Graham Brown reported that he had prepared updated method statements and risk assessments for all work, as tasks occur, and would ensure that all staff had copies and were expected to adhere to the procedures.
- (d) Graham Brown reported that he has investigated outfalls to the navigation in Heybridge area. Three had been found. [Confidential discussion]
- (e) [Confidential item].
- (f) Graham Brown reported that the handrails along the tops of the low walls outside the Heybridge facilities block were now in place, and that Polden Engineering had been contracted to re-site the second ladder at Hoe Mill Lock.
- (g) The Risk Register had been updated, and thanks were recorded to Jim Jenkins for considerable input to the work. All board members were asked to review the register before the next meeting. Neil Edwards would make a copy available to IWA's trustees and would arrange for copy of the Association's risk register to be made available to Essex board members. The board agreed that top risks should be reviewed regularly. Recent interest in risk management had been expressed by the auditors and the need to include a report of risk management in the Association's Annual Report was noted.
- (h) The board reviewed progress on the four vessels that had been giving cause for concern: [Details excluded for reasons of customer confidentiality]
- (i) Graham Brown reported that the Flood Management Plan was now complete and ready to send out as a draft to the relevant local authorities and the Environment Agency. The Emergency Procedures still needed to be updated. Neil Edwards would re-circulate this latter document to

the board for comment. Once reviewed, Graham Brown would circulate these procedures to the correct department within Essex Police and other relevant bodies.

- (j) An updated schedule of certification held at Head Office had been circulated with the agenda. The following points were noted:
 - (i) [Confidential staff item]
 - (ii) Authenticated copies of driving licence had been brought to the December meeting and these were now all up to date on the register for insurance purposes.

Staffing and Management Arrangements

- 3. (a) Graham Brown reported that there were no particular staff matters to report.
- (b) The board agreed that some public relations activity was needed to tell boaters and around the Association generally what the lengthsman are doing.
- (c) Roy Chandler reported on plans for forthcoming weekend work parties involving London WRG, KESCRG and local Essex groups plus IWA Chelmsford Branch volunteers.
- (d) [Confidential item].

Finance

- 4. (a) Income and expenditure reports for the three months to the end of September 2013 had been circulated with the agenda. Income was largely up to budget, and expenditure mostly within budget. There were timing-issues on a number of items, and most capital expenditure projects were running later than planned. David Carrington suggested that the split between revenue and capital projects could usefully be reviewed as the revenue balance should be consistent from year to year. Roy Chandler, David Carrington and Peter Martin would discuss this further outside the meeting.
- (b) The board noted that the cash flow position, circulated with the agenda, remained satisfactory.
- (c) The 2014 Budget, a draft of which was circulated with the agenda, was approved subject to minor amendments discussed during the meeting.
- (d) [Confidential item]
- (e) Schedules showing outstanding debts and those boats without (old) up-to-date mooring agreements, insurance certificates or Boat Safety Scheme certificates were tabled. There were no particular issues not covered elsewhere.
- (f) Roy Chandler reported that contractors for Eastern Power Networks were due to start work on a new electricity cable, to be driven under the Navigation above Ricketts Lock weir, early in the New Year, which had been the subject of a recent lease.
- (g) An updated Leases Schedule had been circulated with the agenda papers. Arrangements to conclude or renew the expired Environment Agency leases at Heybridge, Rushes and Ulting would again be chased up.
- (h) Roy Chandler reported that there was no news on Business Rates.

- (i) The board noted that there had been no progress with the installation of further electricity remote meter readers, but this would now be chased as the suppliers had been changed to British Gas, who would need to change their SIM cards on existing meters.
- (j) [Confidential item].
- (k) David Carrington reported that IWA's Finance Committee had approved the requested increase in the limit for the Association's long term loan to finance capital purchases, to [an amount].

Future Income and Grant Applications

- 5. (a) Roy Chandler reported that Essex Wildlife Trust expected to receive Environment Agency consent, for the planned works above Little Baddow Lock, in February. Graham Brown would approach neighbouring landowners to seek permission for access across their land. Exact details of the works intended had yet to be supplied by the Wildlife Trust, but it was understood that likely that [contractors] could be contracted for the work. Roy Chandler had been invited and planned to attend a meeting with the Environment Agency on Catchment Partnership.
- (b) Roy Chandler reported that the Headland Management Scheme was believed likely to continue for another year.
- (c) [Confidential item].
- (d) [Confidential item]

Report from the Navigation Manager

- 6. (a) Graham Brown had circulated a paper to directors prior to meeting, providing an update on various projects along the Navigation. The board noted this and thanked Graham for the report.
- (b) [Confidential item]
- (c) Contractors had yet to be sourced for the gate and cill repairs at Paper Mill and Little Baddow and Hoe Mill locks. Graham Brown would seek quotes from [various contractors].
- (d) Graham Brown reported that work was progressing steadily on the new toilet block at Paper Mill north bank, led by Sam Hobden. A contractor would be brought in to undertake the specialist roof works.
- (e) Graham Brown reported that a new electricity supply would be needed for the north bank at Paper Mill, and this would need to be laid under the Navigation.
- (f) Graham Brown reported that work to move the car park gate at Paper Mill was now underway and being undertaken by Crown Build. Some resurfacing work in the car park was also being undertaken at the same time, and a redundant bridge over the adjacent stream had been removed to improve drainage.
- (g) Roy Chandler reported that he had established that building regulation consent would not be required for the Sandford toilet block. Quotes had yet to be obtained for the piling foundations. The board agreed that contractors could be brought in to do the building work in order to help speed completion.

- (h) Roy Chandler reported that repairs to the wharf walls at Indigo Wharf were now due to start in January following a delay. Agreement for a £23,000 contribution from Chelmsford City Council had been signed. Taylor Wimpey had been invoiced for their contribution to the work. The shortfall in funding for all the work required would become more evident once works commenced, as the state of existing walls was revealed.
- (i) Graham Brown reported that there was unlikely to be much income from willows over the next few months. Wrights had been called to deal with storm damaged trees between Barnes Lock and Sandford for which there was likely to be a net cost. There was a lot of replanting to do, and the lengthsmen were still finding trees down across boundaries and into farmers' fields following recent stormy weather.
- (j) Roy Chandler reported that Chelmsford City Council had given consent for the submitted tree management plan covering the Navigation within the City Council's boundary. A similar application was to be prepared for Maldon District Council.
- (k) Graham Brown reported progress on the purchase of a tractor for towpath maintenance. The current favoured model was an Avant 635 with various attachments, including a flail, back-hoe and blade for levelling. A demonstration was to be arranged.
- (l) Graham Brown reported that a schedule for works planned in 2014 was under preparation.

Update on Issues Discussed at Previous Meetings

- 7. (a) [Confidential item]
- (b) [Confidential item].
- (c) [Confidential item]
- (d) Roy Chandler reported that there had been no further developments on Sandford Mill, but had chased the matter with Chelmsford City Council.
- (e) Roy Chandler reported that the Environment Agency had invited him to attend a meeting with themselves and Countryside Properties about Heybridge local plan proposals for the development of 900 homes on land owned by [a local landowner]. There was some concern at flood water risks, which might be mitigated with new drains into the Navigation, and it was possible that this could be used to develop the Langford park ideas.
- (f) John Pomfret had circulated a draft of the draft vegetation management policy, and this had been circulated to the board. Some data from a river survey would be a helpful addition. Roy Chandler would ask the Environment Agency, as Essex Wildlife Trust had not been able to assist. Little Baddow Parish Council had some data.. John Pomfret would circulate an updated draft.
- (g) Roy Chandler reported on correspondence with consultants and Chelmsford City Council (acting for the Highways Agency) about the A138 viaduct replacement and that he had received plans for river training, which he had objected to, as the plans sought to replace existing piling with gabions that would be difficult to moor against and likely to have a short life span. The Council's current plan was now to fix timber to gabions, but an objection would be maintained as the design was very weak and unlikely to last long. Roy Chandler had reminded the Council that they had yet to supply any legal documents to take possession of the site. The board expressed concern that the proposed working deck height might prevent passage along the Navigation during construction work, and Roy Chandler would pursue this.

- (h) Roy Chandler reported that there had been little progress on Springfield Basin developments.
- (i) Hugh Turner had circulated a report on the Helmsman's Training Courses activity. The board agreed that it would be helpful to get the former WRG work boat back into use, though this would require some expense for steel plating repairs.
- (j) [Confidential item]
- (k) [Confidential item].

Other Business

- 8. (a) Roy Chandler reported that he had received drawings for two proposed crossings of the Navigation by the new Chelmsford Effluent Pipe. [Confidential discussion]
- (b) Roy Chandler reported that the next users-meeting was planned for Thursday 4th February at Langford Village Hall.

Future Meetings

- 9. (a) The next meeting would be held at 10.00 am on Monday 3rd March at Paper Mill Lock.
- (b) Dates for other 2014 meetings were agreed as Wednesday 28th May* (Paper Mill Lock), Friday 5th September (Paper Mill Lock) and Thursday 4th December (Chesham).

No other business was transacted and the meeting closed at 3.00 p.m.

* Subsequently changed to Tuesday 27th May