

Minutes of the meeting of the board of directors held at Paper Mill Lock, Little Baddow at 10.00 a.m. on Thursday 1st December 2016.

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

In Attendance: Andrew Overy and David Smart

Apologies for absence: None

Declaration of Interest: Peter Martin declared that he was a member of the board of the Rural Community Council of Essex which administers the county's LEADER funds.

Minutes of Meetings

1. The minutes of the board meeting held on 8th September 2016, 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) [Confidential item]

(b) David Smart had prepared a site safety audit form, and completed a sample for Paper Mill Lock Island, which had been circulated to directors for information. Similar forms would be completed for other sites. The form included audit information both for the site and the personnel working on the site. The board suggested that an outside review could be sought from someone suitably qualified to undertake an independent review of Health & Safety along the navigation. There were arguments in favour of a review before completing further audit reports, or when they were all complete, as their absence was something that the board was aware required attention. The issue of trailing leads for electric supplies for boats was noted as being of particular concern. Consideration needed to be given to addressing all the issues noted, but balanced by the available resources. David Smart was asked to complete the forms for the whole navigation by the next board meeting. Jim Jenkins, who had a NEBOSH (National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health) qualification offered to provide assistance.

Finance

3. (a) Income and expenditure reports for the nine months to the end of September 2016 and ten months to the end of October 2016 had been circulated with the agenda and were noted. Most areas of income were slightly ahead of budget, but there had also been additional expenditure on equipment maintenance. A number of capital works planned for late 2016 would actually occur in early 2017 owing to a variety of reasons mostly caused by delays from outside contractors. The cash flow forecast for the end of December / early New Year suggested that there was a possible need for a draw down from the restricted funds. However, payments for the Hoe Mill lock gates and [another possible] purchase might not need to be made as early as anticipated in the cash flow forecast, and thus a drawdown avoided until much later in the year. IWA's Finance Committee had been advised of the possible drawdown, and was content for the drawdown to take place if needed.

- (b) [Confidential item]
- (c) A proposed budget for 2017 and covering paper by Andrew Overy had been circulated to the board. There were a number of areas where income and expenditure that were subject to variation dependent on t[possible expenditure] and staffing requirements, as well as potential further capital grants. Overall the forecast trading position was more favourable than had been thought was likely a few months ago. The board was content with the budget in principle, but asked for an updated version to be circulated for final approval to take into account matters discussed at the meeting.
- (d) [Confidential item].
- (e) David Smart reported that most items of machinery were now in good maintenance order, but there was potential expenditure necessary for repairs to [one particular item]. David would follow this up and circulate the board if any substantial expenditure was required.
- (f) The board requested that Hargreaves should be asked to submit an invoice for the Hoe Mill lock gates, to be dated before the end of the year, along with a certificate of ownership once the gates were paid for. The gates had already been manufactured and delivered, and therefore payment should appear in the 2016 financial statements.

Staff, Volunteer and Management Arrangements

- 4. (a) [Confidential item]
- (b) [Confidential item]
- (c) [Confidential item]
- (d) Roy Chandler reported that Colin Basil (builder and owner of Hoe Mill Lock Cottage) had been contracted on a temporary basis to undertake minor building works, in the absence of a lengthsman following Eve Sullivan's departure.
- (e) David Smart reported that Laura Ellis had been appointed as Residential Caretaker at Hoe Mill to fill the vacancy created by June Meads' retirement. Laura was due to start employment in mid-December and had purchased a new vessel, but it had yet to be craned in on the Navigation.

Management Plans for the Navigation

- 5. (a) Roy Chandler reported that he had updated the Long Term Management Plan, which had been circulated to directors for comment. [Detailed points omitted]
- (b) Roy Chandler reported that the Social Impact Report had been updated and circulated to directors for comment. Directors were also asked to consider whether it might be given a more attractive title, and be dated, but otherwise it was considered a near-finished and very useful document. Directors were asked to send any comments to Roy Chandler.
- (c) An updated Assets Schedule had been circulated to directors. David Smart had prepared a summary of the D and E rated assets, and this would be circulated to directors. Craig Holliday reported that Essex & Suffolk Water Company's works at Heybridge were progressing well.

Matters of Report

6. A comprehensive report on works and other management issues along the Navigation had been provided as part of the Navigation Management Report that was attached to the agenda. Reports on aged debtors, boaters' compliance, boat movements, fundraising and certification held were also circulated. The following were amongst the points noted:
 - (a) [Confidential item].
 - (b) [Confidential item].
 - (c) The potential for a Health & Safety inspection from insurers during 2017 was noted.
 - (d) [Confidential item].
 - (e) There had been delays on the supply of replacement windows for Heybridge Lock House, which meant that scaffolding separate to that used for the subsidence repairs would be necessary. The subsidence work had been completed and signed off as satisfactory.
 - (f) The pipe through the bottom of Heybridge Sea Lock, for the new sewage plant, was due to be installed once the Sea Lock had been fully drained.
 - (g) Colin Edmond reported that tree works on a neighbouring commercial property in Heybridge had probably included lopping some trees on Navigation land, and that these needed to be inspected for stability to ensure they did not fall across the Navigation during the next big storm.
 - (h) Roy Chandler reported that Essex & Suffolk Water had visited Beeleigh Lock, but the company had yet to advise the extent of works planned next winter.
 - (i) Lock gates had been ordered for Barnes Lock. Quotes had been received for new gates for Springfield Lock, but an order had not yet been placed.
 - (j) Following the gift of 'Blue Moon', two other small vessels had been offered to the company for Navigation funds. There were three other vessels that needed to be sold to cover debts. A new page would be added to the web site to advertise these boats for sale, once details of the vessels had been provided.
 - (k) WRG had offered three Canal Camps for 2017 and accommodation for these had been booked on the *Haybay*.
 - (l) Roy Chandler reported that there was limited potential for harvesting willows at the moment. [Detail omitted]
 - (m) The triathlon had taken place in September and was successful, albeit with fewer participants than had been anticipated. A different style of event was under consideration for 2017, with the aim of encouraging greater participation.
 - (n) The board noted that the Association of Navigation Authorities had reduced its activity owing to reduced funding, but IWA's Navigation Committee had asked Essex Waterways to retain its membership. John Pomfret would attend future meetings.
 - (o) The fund raising report and various grant applications in train were noted.

- (p) The need to undertake driving licence checks was noted. Neil Edwards would circulate a note of the new procedure to David Smart and relevant board members.

Future Meetings

7. The next meeting would be held at 10.00 am on Thursday 2nd March 2017 (Paper Mill) The following meeting would be on Tuesday 6th June 2017. Dates for September and December would be finalised at the March meeting.

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