

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING 25th July 1998

1. Apologies for absence.

Penny Barber, Geoff Barnett, Peter Foster, Stephen Peters, Andrew Sherrey, Denis Smith, Nikki Timbrell.

2. Accuracy of minutes.

Minutes were signed as accurate

3. Matters arising from the minutes.

Peter Lea to write to the DETR to propose that Fraenkel & Ptnrs be asked to revise and update the parts of the original Report on channel dimensions. Action Peter Lea

The fresh draft of the Waterways code was circulated in June. This includes almost all of our suggestions.

Close fishing season: David Daines is having a major difference of opinion with E.A. as the minutes were incorrect. E.A. state that they are notes not minutes. David is liaising with RSPB and E.N. to co-ordinate opposition to the E.A.'s plans. IWA have written to the E.A. criticising their plans, endorsed by Nabo and other user groups. EA's attitude seems to be that the closed season will be abolished whatever anyone says and whatever the evidence.

Channel dimensions: DETR are studying BW's revised proposals, which are not an improvement. Our views are still the same. There will be consultation and then a Public Inquiry; as the old standards are 30 years out of date it is worth the expense. This will probably take place next year.

Sheffield and South Yorks Navigation: We have received letters both from DETR and Waddingtons. BW have agreed to most of IWA's reservations, but may not be able to get changes made to the DETR consultation document. Nabo will have to look at the issue again when the document is published. The time scale is thought to be, proposals early September, replies by early October and a Public Inquiry at the end of October

Franchising: There is no information yet. Angela Eagle is not giving out any details. Editorials in the waterway mags. are hysterical so Nabo is not commenting, but waiting until we have more information.

Aylesbury are happy for us to supply a table of goods for sale at their rally.

Rubbish on the Trent: PL's letter has received replies, passed on to Peter Foster for further comment. Action Peter Foster

Middle levels: We have received a polite but unhelpful reply. Sue to write again to clarify and ask for consultation. Action Sue Burchett

Peter has replied to all who wrote about continuous cruising.

4. Membership proposals.

Numbers of members are important to us. Council discussed whether to have two additional types of members: affiliated members and associated members. They should be kept as two separate issues. Resolutions are required for the AGM if the Constitution is to be changed.

Affiliated members (clubs and other organisations): for - numbers, and existing demand. Against - If a club becomes a member will we lose the individual members from that club? Nigel proposed and Christine seconded that we recommend having non-voting affiliated members; all agreed.

Associated members: non-boatowners who supported us, such as members who had sold their boats. They could join but not have a vote. Proposed by John Denton seconded by Roger Davis; all agreed.

Shared ownership is considered to be owning a boat and therefore eligible for full membership. Proposed by Peter Lea seconded by Christine; all agreed.

The AGM will set the subscription rate. Nabo needs more members more than money. It costs approx. £6 to service each member. It was suggested that we recommend that affiliated and associated members pay £10; full members under 18 £5. The two new categories would get a newsletter and corporate members would also get press releases. Both can attend the AGM but not vote and only speak if allowed by the Chair. Coloured voting papers could be given to full members on entry to the AGM to distinguish them from others.

Nigel is to draft resolutions for the AGM. These are to be circulated and then sent to Wendy before the end of September. Action Nigel and Wendy

5. High intensity licenses.

There is to be a workshop at Watford in September to discuss BW's ideas further - PL will attend. Penny is waiting for a reply from BW regarding figures involved. A question was asked in Parliament on the matter.

6. BW National User Group meeting.

Four new members have been appointed to the BW board. Stewart Sim gave a presentation on channel dimensions and promised a time frame for Category 2 and 3 dredging, and that the funds to pay for this is to be ring fenced. There will be periodic reviews of waterway standards.

BW want us to back the Trust. BW reckon that they will obtain £6 million a year from membership, donations and legacies as a charity.

There have been 160 successful prosecutions for licence evasion.

Tow paths are not to be paved to turn them into cycleways where it is not appropriate.

Assurance was given that the terms of reference for the Ombudsman are still have not changed.

7. Inland Navigation Forum meeting.

The Gas Street junk has been abandoned. Adrian Stott is continuing to monitor the possible European-led Red Diesel duty changes.

Philip Ogden presented our views on Channel dimensions, but the others had already decided their positions.

8. Winter Stoppage meeting.

Nabo is to request BW to put the winter stoppage list on the internet.

The general start date for stoppages is 2nd Nov and nearly all waterways should be open by 12th March. IWA are objecting to the long closure on the Thames Valley Canal. BW have promised to send an advance copy to user groups by early August and copies to all licence holders during early Sept.

9. Joint EA/BW licence review meeting.

EA & BW have had a meeting with user reps to review the possibility of reciprocal (joint) licencing. The suggestions which will be studied in detail are: 1) A joint licence for all vessels on both systems (not optional; cost approximately an extra 3%), or 2) An optional top up licence allowing an individual vessel unrestricted use of both systems (cost approximately an extra 50%). Suggestions involving discounts, "travel cards", etc were rejected.

10. Ombudsman's report.

The Ombudsman's report is now out. There have been 32 complaints of which 13 were accepted for investigation. Three unresolved cases from the previous year and three

new cases have been decided. Maladministration found in two of the six cases (one in part only). Some of the decisions set potentially important precedents. The Ombudsman believes the six month deadline for making complaints may have to be extended.

11. Council work load and priorities.

Nabo's priorities have now been identified. We aren't going to enough user group meetings. Denis is still waiting for the full list of meetings that are being attended. John Denton will help Denis Smith chase up the information which is still awaited from Council members. Action John, Denis and all Council - **THIS IS IMPORTANT!!**

It was noted that we have done more campaigning this year.

Every member of Council should attend at least some of their local meetings. John is to write to each regional rep. for dates of meetings and to ask BW to send us minutes of meetings not attended. Action John

12. Rallies and marketing.

Christine suggested we needed presentation packs for talks at boat club meetings. It was noted that we have difficulty finding speakers especially as they need to be council members in order to answer the sort of topical questions asked.

The May rallies recruited 58 members.

Our marquee's space at Salford had been moved but Christine sorted it out.

13. Regional meetings attendance.

Peter Lea to write to Chris Mitchell's secretary stating that he is not the Southern Region Rep and Geof Rogerson is. Action Peter Lea

Geoff Rogerson is to take on co-ordination of attendance at meetings. Action Geoff

A replacement is going to be needed for Denis Smith as he is planning to retire from Council. John and Christine know a possible volunteer and would talk to him about taking this job on. Action Christine & John

Break for lunch. Many thanks for flowers and cakes.

14. Other meetings and developments.

The suggestions for combatting vandalism on the Wolverhampton flight and on the Worcester & Birmingham are either using the same locking mechanism as the Erewash (BW's preferred solution) or using the same windlass as the Middle Levels.

BW plans to replace two sets of top gates on the Stoke Bruerne flight without replacing the gate paddles. Users (P Lea, D Daines, J Macdonald) complained. BW say it is a safety issue as gate paddles would endanger access across the top lock, and if these are not installed there is no point in replacing the others. C Mitchell is considering the issue. There is a general commitment in the Southern region to replace gate paddles when gates are replaced.

It was noted that BW are dreaming up their own names for locks.

It is proposed to charge Houseboats the "going commercial rate" for moorings. Nabo has objected; we believe that the mooring matrix should be adhered to.

Towpath policy is to be left to the IWA.

The IWA's draft environmental policy was passed to Christine for perusal and comment. Action Christine

EA are working on access for the disabled and have commissioned a study from the Fieldfare trust.

Reports of planned pontoons at Market Drayton and Penkrige winding holes have been passed to Denis to investigate. Action Denis

Sue and Peter gave a report on BW's annual meeting. The BW plan for the future was felt to be pie in the sky and a wasted opportunity. The meeting was very polite with

none of BW's statements being challenged.

15. Finance.

The accounts need to be presented to Council at the next meeting. Action Andrew

16. Membership.

Publicity for our 2000th member was discussed. The standing orders have increased and arrears are down this year.

The disk of the graph of membership is to be sent to Christine for a display at Salford.

Action Roger

Wendy will reproduce "Join Nabo Here" for Christine.

Action Christine & Wendy

17. Press matters.

The late distribution of Nabo News was discussed. No one involved will admit to having missed deadlines. Matter now dropped.

Potted CV's are needed by Wendy by end September. There will be several vacancies on Council and the fact should be advertised.

Action All & Wendy

The AGM notice will be going out as soon as possible after the 3rd October meeting

The mail shot to canal companies has been completed. Many thanks to Wendy.

Wendy is to suggest ways of including pictures in our internet page. There have been 1094 "hits".

Action Wendy

We need an AGM piece on resolutions and members resolutions

Action Wendy

Nominations are to be sent to Sue and forwarded to Wendy. Action Sue & Wendy

Wendy confirmed that the room had been booked from 10am to 3.30 pm for the AGM at Gloucester.

18. AOB.

Geof reported on the K&A cycleway. An interim route has been installed without upgrading the towpath. He is still awaiting a reply from ROSPA. BW is taking continuous cruisers that they don't believe are continuously cruising to court in order to have continuous cruising defined in law.

At Claverton bollards are to be replaced by rings. More linear moorings are being created; these are not popular with marina owners. Geof is to write to Waterways World about this as chairman of The Taverners about this.

Action Geof

It was noted that BW gave an Undertaking to have a mix of moorings of different durations wherever they impose mooring restrictions. Waterway managers should be reminded of this.

Action all Regional Reps

Council agreed to sponsor the WRG Salford panto programs for £100. The programs will have "Sponsored by NABO" on the front cover.

Action Sue & Andrew

