

Minutes of a Council Meeting of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOAT OWNERS

Held at the Waggon and Horses, Oldbury on Sat 27th April 2013

Present: David Fletcher (Chair), Jane Taylor, Simon Robbins, Geoffrey Rogerson, Stephen Peters, Mike Rodd, Mark Tizard. Gen.Sec : Richard Carpenter

1. Apologies: Andy Colyer, Peter Fellows

2. Welcome to guest Mike Annan. Belinda observed!

3. Minutes of 16th March 2012

- a) Approved unanimously
- b) Matters Arising

Simon reported that there had been no response to his requests to find how many FOI requests CRT had been having following complaints about the number.

Membership Admin – to continue to be discussed during this meeting, including communication of new fees etc.

New fees had been put on web.

E Mails – David to check on new format and the impact on some accounts – it seems some mails are getting in spam filters. DF

Main Agenda

4. Licencing moorings Charging

a) K+A Moorings and others

GR passed comments about lack of response in general on K&A initiatives. General discussion consensus that CRT are watering down issues as they see the SE report as Policy.

SR reported on some informal feedback from the on-going dialogue with CRT by Cowley and Uxbridge Boaters. He also indicated that on the Lee and Stort some hostile response resulted in CRT backing off and now launched a "Building Better Relationships" Policy has started.

After a general discussion the consensus agreed that CRT seem to have differing policies for each region with resultant differences and potential understandings. GR pointed out that much of these exceeds legal guidelines. CRT approach now seems to be to just ignore this and "take us to court" if one has a problem.

Council declared that it tried to understand the issues faced by CRT and how its dealing with its various consultations but all confirmed the impression the CRT were intent to ignore views.

K&A Sub group report – response. GR/MR will extract points for response and circulate for councils viewpoint.

b) Houseboats – SR reported that the consultation has been published on CRT web site but felt it was little more than an exercise. He and DF will do a response to things not felt covered..

c) Enforcement cases

SR reported there had been no more new cases and he updates the meeting on other things he had picked up on.

d) Terms and Conditions challenge. DF. Nothing further to report,.

e) South Each Visitor Consultation

MF updates the latest position on the consultation report and will draft a response for Council approval to send. **MT**

DF to circulate

fi) Legal aspects of SE

Council debated at some length the questions to be asked of the Legal Team –a number were raised and it was agree that GR/MT/MR will decide on the main points.

GR estimated that the costs would be in the order of £2000 – this figure approved unanimously.

SR proposed that we should formulate a Press release to say we are seeking legal advice and this should be copied to John Dodwell. It was greed to wait until the advice was received.

5. CRT Matters

a) NUF – nothing to report

b) Navigation Advisory Group – DF reported on the most recent meeting nothing too heavy – lock ladders coming under scrutiny. David also reported that Vince Moran has been very reasonable on this forum. Next meeting was in early June.

c) User Group Meetings – Very little feedback and comment from the Regions.

d) Surgeries/UG . This seems to have gone quiet confirming that this was possibly a Regional sample.

6. EA Matters

DF reported that there had been some activity on lock keepers cottages and that TuG were still very active in heading off any CRT takeover. Our representative on Tug keeps DF informed.

7. Planning for 2013

a) **Rebranding** –Leaflets were distributed to all present, some had also gone to volunteers., including the K&A Trust shops. Final designs were accepted!

b) **Distribution** –RC will contact marinas and brokers to ask if they would mind handing these to new boaters. Already used most will need reprint.

c) **Policy Document** DF had circulated his take on revisions, and this was now being collated by Peter as part of the new Members Handbook.

d) **New Members Welcome Pack** It was reported that this was still in the stages of being finalised and that a face to face meeting had not been arranged with Melanie due to time constraints and locations. SR asked for a record to be made that too much time was being spent in council discussing admin structure. He volunteered to write a paper for discussion to allow Council to put in place and understand fully what was needed for the future. SR

8. Finance

S Peters reported we are comfortably solvent with the position on accounts as follows :-

- Santander - £1731
- Barclays - £3206
- Barclays deposit - £13744
 - TOTAL £18681

Stephen outlined brief details of a working budget he had. And this will be circulated.

SP to circulate

9. Web Matters

a) **Management and Responsibility** -David again stressed just how much of his time and personal energy and sought help with other duties connected with the Chair. No one offered any uptake. David again out that if anyone would volunteer to take on the Chair he is ready to relinquish to concentrate on web BSS and NAG.

b) **Membership Database** - David continues investigating the online database-. He has been working with Melanie to reconcile the db on line and communication needs – this at distance but progress was being made.

David continued to stress the importance -of making regular web postings – even if they are picked up elsewhere and from forums. We can always add – a spokesman from NABO said.....

ALL

10. NABO promotion and marketing

a) **Press Officer.** RC happy to do Press releases but need instruction from active Council Topics – we got some activity from our Policy release we need to keep it up.

11. NABO News

Articles to include

- Report from Peter Fellows (via RC) that he had already got a reasonable amount of material to use, however reminded everyone that he needed more.

PF would be unable to attend next Council as sought writer for Fly on the Wall – Jayne was sort of volunteered! JT

12. AOB

i) BBS. DF reported that he had accepted the chair of the technical committee and Mike Rodd is now a member of one of the sub committee's (hire boats?) Biggest problem to get across is issues related to gas.

Simon offered to do some work on the regulation of smokeless fuel in London SF

May saw Boat Safety Week promotion

ii) MT proposed that we should always have a couple of prime issues that are NABO issues and on running to indicate to all what NABO is about. He would propose something at the June Meeting.

iii) DF asked if we could all be sure that we coordinate our correspondence with CRT in an orderly fashion to specific people i.e. Damian. He was concerned that we might be lost if we are not coordinated.

iv) DF again reminded Council that thought needed to be made to the composition of Council going forward, at least two people - RC and himself stepping down from their roles – although he has intent to remain on Council if nominated.

Meeting closed at 15.06 Next Council Meeting will be at the Waggon and Horses on Saturday 8th June commencing at 10.45am

Approved
Dun 8/6/13

Legal strategy.

1. To make the trustees aware that there are legal Opinions other than those of BW/CRT lawyers.
2. That these Opinions emanate from eminent chambers i.e. Blackstone Chambers, Lincolns Inn.
3. Our latest meeting with our lawyers has confirmed the continued validity of these Opinions.
4. To be non confrontational but firm with the CRT trustees, advising them that all of our legal Opinion will be made available to our members.
5. To point out that the legal Opinion states firmly that BW/CRT have been operating ,and are currently endeavouring to implement, “rules” that are considered to be both illegal and without lawful authority.

Tactics

- A. To enlist support of other organisations to bring about a moratorium on CRTs intentions pending an intensive and prolonged enforcement programme.
- B. To enlist the support of our members to this end.
- C. To obtain wider coverage through the Waterways Press and possibly with the help of Shakespeare the national press.
- D. Shakespeare writing to the government.