

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

Held at the Titford Pumphouse, Engine Street, Oldbury at 10.45am on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April  
2015

**Present:** Mike Rodd (Chair), Richard Carpenter, Peter Fellows, David Fletcher, Phil Goulding, Paul Howland, Stephen Peters, Mark Tizard, Geoffrey Rogerson, Trevor Rogers; Members: Mick Fitzgibbons, Helen Hutt, Alan Wildman (RBOA Interim Chair).

1) **Apologies for absence:** None

2) **Minutes of last meeting**

i) Minutes 14<sup>th</sup> March approved unanimously. Actions are complete unless recorded below or updated in agenda.

ii) Matters Arising and actions:

2(ii) RBOA. Mike and Mark met with RBOA Interim Chair and agreed to work closely together to see what opportunities could be created for the future.

2(ii): Dredging – There is a suggestion to publish a list of contacts at CRT so that boaters can direct their comments. This is still in progress. Mike and Mark will raise it at the next meeting with CRT.

MR/MT

4 (ii) Cycling. Item required for NN. CRT are now pushing out their towpath policy document at user meetings. NABO policy is as per our submission earlier this year.

DF

8 (ii) Accounts Helen has produced draft accounts from the VT package.

8 (ii) Auditor. All the members with accounts experience have declined to become the auditor. Helen has a contact and will get another quote. Alan Wildman has a contact also. We need to keep on with this as we need the accounts doing over the summer.

SP, AW,  
HH

11 (iii) Ombudsman. This is not resolved Mike will speak with Ian Rogers about this at the next occasion.

MR

3) **Policy Discussions: Matters requiring agreement and action from this meeting**

i). CRT Terms and Conditions.

We made another submission in March against some of the paragraphs of the intended terms. There is no point by point reply from CRT, but on Thursday prior to the meeting, they published a revision to be introduced on 1 May. Some items are conceded, vis dropped the requirement to have home mooring “throughout the period of the licence”, put back right to terminate home mooring, dropped right to change to terms at one month notice, dropped entry to boat (without permission). Council are not satisfied with this and this focuses on the legality, the evidential need, the fairness of the contract, and the common sense.

Legal representative stated that we had to decide whether to make a stand, or for ever stay quiet. To make a stand we would need current legal advice although many of the issues referred back to the counsel’s advice we had obtained in the past. Council agreed in principle that we should press the case and authorised expenditure of £1500 for solicitors fees when the time is right.

GR/SP  
MR

It was agreed that we press CRT for a written reply and get this before starting our work, so that the package to Mark Beasley would be as complete as possible and avoid a second round of charges.

Other points made: Should we recommend members to sign their licence applications

“under protest”. Should we go to the Waterways Minister on these issues?

Mike needs a summary for the meeting with Ian Rogers on 29 April

GR/DF

ii). Reaction to the continuing CC PR disaster and our response  
CRT’s letter to all Ccer’s has backfired. There are mixed views as to whether it is well worded. As a result CRT are swamped with requests for sighting data. They cannot readily extract it from their system for distribution and it is taking time. They have in some cases asked for boaters data first before releasing theirs (presumably to stop boaters amended logs to ‘prove’ CRT data wrong).

CRT will commence action on 1<sup>st</sup> May against 750 who are doing less than 5km. They say they have the resources. NABO had agreed a phased approach, first targeting boaters who don’t move, then those who move 5-20km, and one of the methods is issuance of 3 or 6 month licences as a warning.

How all this relates to up to 5 month winter mooring permits is not yet known and there is a good chance of much confusion on this issue. Boaters are certainly getting short term licences and asked to mend their ways. There are boaters complaining that this is based on past movement when the boaters were ‘unaware’ of what is required and this is unfair. Council did not express support for this argument, and point out that CRT have little option but to do this. Boaters should have plenty of chance to view their CRT record and ensure that it is correct.

This is Ian Rogers’ biggest issue. Mike and Mark will discuss this week.

MR/MT

iii). K&A moorings trial.

This finished on 31 March. We need to see the official reports and Geoffrey will ask. It is known that on one side, boats have moved more, but there is far from full compliance.

GR

CRT have reported that those in enforcement from this period will continue, though it is not clear to us on what basis they will be pursued. Range data gathered will be used to guide those who have not moved enough.

The definition of ‘place’ used in the trial has merit, and learning should be taken elsewhere. The use of parish or local council areas has merit and we support the principle. How can we progress this?

MR/MT

The impact of uncontrolled winter moorings on local areas has been raised by the area Councils. They may be confined to 28 days.

MR

iv). Take over of EA waters by CRT

It is reported by CRT that this is going to happen in a time frame of 3 years or so.

NABO’s position has been that we would like to see:

CRT settled and up and running well (they probably think they are) though how can this be after another major reorganisation?

An appropriate financial settlement ( Trustees will have something to say)

No migration of cash either way

A clear understanding of the cost allocation of navigation and flood protection

A clear understanding of the responsibility for navigation and flood protection

It is noted that there are many ways in which management of EA waters can be handled and full integration should not be assumed.

4)

#### **CRT Matters**

i) Meeting with Ian Rogers. This was covered above.

ii) Report on recent CRT meeting with the National Associations..

Mike reported that this was again listening and little opportunity for discussion and debate. As such it is expensive for two to go and his feeling was that we should only go single handed and arrange for individual meetings with CRT on our agenda. There followed a discussion on other ideas vis: asking for single issue

MR/MT

meetings, do a deal with RBOA and other users to control better the agenda, have a premeet with other users before hand, should not try and duplicate NUF meetings, should report as we see it rather than manipulated notes. It was noted that NBTAs had been excluded from these meetings. This will all be also be discussed at the forthcoming meeting with Ian Rogers

5) **Membership, promotion and marketing**

i) Attracting new members:

There have been more new members in the last few weeks than for a long time, driven by the current chaos on CRT issues. The need is still to turn people contacting the Facebook page into members or get some money from them. Richard has some ideas and a contact with expertise to further develop the FB site and offered to do so. The possibility of an e member was discussed but not settled. There was more inclination to go for donations from FB sign ons at this time.

RC

ii) RCR:

These people are not responding. It is clear that the deal they have offered us is nothing special, and they are not proving the technical articles for NN. They have ducked three contacts from Richard. To be followed up.

RC

iii) Historic payments and credits in the accounts.

Helen and David have concluded the last round of updates to records on VT to write off long outstanding over and underpayments against member accounts. This is in accordance with the policy agreed by Council last year. The effect is to reduce the booked exposure to refunds. The annual accounts will reflect this new data.

DF/HH

iv) Membership handling

Normal processing continues with thanks to the team. We have identified some 20 members who continue to pay the subs at the old rate and do not respond to correspondence. Distribution of NN has been suspended to them to save money. They will be followed up again in the summer. We have seven who continue to pay but we have no contact details. Nothing more can be done at this time. We have started a programme of asking members using our Santander account to change over to Barclays. The intention is then to close the Santander account in the financial year 2016/7. Hopefully this will stop the 7's payments once and for all.

DF

DF

v) London rep.

Mark reported that Simon has stood down, and he is looking for a new contact for the area, though we are not completely naked.

MT

6) **EA Matters**

i) The last NUF was a good meeting, well prepared by EA and good level of discussion. EA are in purdah for the election, so not much policy going on. EA reported that they has achieved a conviction for a boater, one Mr N Brown, but the judge only awarded a minimum penalty and no costs.

ii) Many Thames users are against CRT taking over EA waters.

7) **BSS Matters**

i) David and Mike reported on the technical meeting in April. The new hire boat requirements will go to consultation shortly. The Hire boat code is struggling to get AINA support in the same time frame and will go to consultation separately. This has no effect on private boaters.

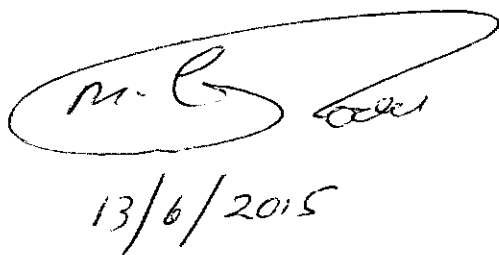
ii) BSS reported on a recent failure of a solid fuel stove that cracked around the seams. It was due to continued exposure to rain causing the casting to crack around the panel connections. David will do an item for NN

DF

8) **Finances**

- i) Helen presented draft accounts for the year. She will finalise and may need assistance to answer queries. We are on a more sound footing than last year. **HH/SP**
- ii) Current balances:  
 Barclays current account - £7058  
 Barclays deposit account - £8757  
 Santander - £1804  
 Total - £17,619
- 9) **Web matters**  
 i) Two dummy sites have been prepared and Council have been offering comments. It was agreed to go with the later version with the responsive template. Comments and contribution are very welcome, and the format is very flexible. The target will be to get this on line in June when David is back from a trip. **DF**
- 10) **NABO News**  
 i) Articles so far for the May issue:  
 Stove crack and failure David  
 Towpath cycling David  
 CRT 1974 Acts of Parliament - Stephen.  
 NB FAQ Louis.  
 Next generation conference Helen  
 NABO's comments on the proposed changes to CRT's licence T&Cs Mike and Mark  
 CRT 10 year strategy Mike Fitzgibbon  
 Santander bank a/c David  
 Traders report on Stone event Paul  
 ii) Peter reported on ALSC royalties. He has previous experience. They will not accept items from staff members, but otherwise is fine. **PF**  
 iii) Peter reported that he was not happy with the cover printing and he would follow this up with the printer **PF**
- 11) **AOB**  
 i) Helen said that she had a contact in the professional indemnity insurance business and asked if she could obtain another quotation. This was agreed. **HH**  
 ii) Phil reported on the CRT meeting about bridge automation on the G&S. This was a good meeting with lots of local representation. He felt it a good thing that an outsider was there too. The unions were represented and it is apparently that CRT are talking openly about this.  
 iii) It was agreed that the AGM on 14 November would be in Wolverhampton BC if it was available. Richard will book **RC**  
 iv) The next meeting of Council on 13 June will be at Wolverhampton BC **RC**

DF 28/04/15

  
 M. G. [unclear]  
 13/6/2015