

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

Held at Tamworth Cruising Club , Tamworth at 10.45am
on Saturday 12th March 2016

Present: Mike Rodd (Chair), Richard Carpenter, Peter Fellows, Phil Goulding, Paul Howland, Stephen Peters, Trevor Rogers; David Fletcher. Members: Alison Tuck, Keith CBOA

1) **Apologies for absence:** Helen Hutt, Stella Ridgeway, Geoffrey Rogerson, Mark Tizard

2) **Minutes of last meeting**

i) Minutes 23rd January approved unanimously. Actions are complete unless recorded below or updated in agenda.

ii) Matters Arising and actions:

Item from 2(ii)

g. Regional reps. Tony Parrot is considered as possible London Rep. Mark will speak to him as Stella is indisposed. Outstanding

q. Hungerford Marina. It was noted that the site has been cleared but no work is now taking place. It is thought that this is unlikely to proceed.

MT

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

i). Preparation for meeting on 16 March with CRT.

CRT have at short noticed advised that their representatives would be only subordinate of Matthew Symonds. This is unacceptable treatment and Chair has written in complaint to Ian Rogers. He has responded acknowledging the fault and committed to reconvene. It is noted that Mike Grimes has a family bereavement. Mike will fix a new date.

MR

ii) Discussion on CRT priorities

Item held over until next meeting.

MT

iii) CRT recent documents on CC boating

CRT have on 10 March issued an update on CC enforcement. From 1 May 2016 CRT will no longer offer three month restricted licences to boaters who have not been meeting the terms of their CC licence. There are reportedly 5,000 boats without a home mooring and 600 have had a short duration licence issued to enable a more acceptable range of movement. CRT will now refuse licences to those who do not move enough.

It is apparent that CRT are now interpreting CC as a range of 20 miles, movement every 14 days by at least 1km. Mike will ask CRT to confirm that the legal term another 'Place' is now considered to be 1km up the canal.

MR

Council debated the issues and noted:

*CRT had not consulted on this, and although there was pre notice, important details were not revealed prior to release.

*The changes do not address shuffling in London, and we look to the London Mooring Strategy to help with this, zoning, new moorings, enforcement

*There is more clarity needed, to many questions.

*The old legal advice was that the 95 Act is deliberately vague, because this give boaters some discretion for individual circumstances. Making rules specific and restrictive takes away this freedom.

Mike will add to list to talk with Grimes.

MR

iv) Approach to CRT taking over EA waters

Parry has been seen with EA counterparts on the Thames, and have stated that working parties has been established to investigate future action..

Keith reported from the NUF and David from NAG:

That it was clear that it had to make financial sense to the Trustees.

CRT report that the lock structures are in good condition and equate to condition B/C. They are more worried about flood issues, which is not their expertise.

CRT have to demonstrate that can manage the additional workload including the politics of the Thames, and the unresolved flood management interfaces, and the unresolved issues of inconsistency of funding and registration on their waterways. The waters are diverse and include several odds and ends as well as the main rivers.

CRT see the EA merge as part of the process for renewal of the contract for the canals in 10 years' time.

Parry has an ambitious agenda, and this is part of success and then he will move on.

RTA have recently said NO and customer service is very poor.

NABO policy is still NO to this. No clear benefit on cost saving, too many unresolved internal issues with EA, too early for fledgling CRT management and an unacceptable cost risk.

4)

CRT Matters

i) Report on NAG meetings.

David reported that the Operational meeting had been held on 9 March. CRT were represented by Julie Sharman following Vince Moran retirement. Initial response is favourable. NAG sub group is working on service facilities. CRT have completed a survey and the data will be uploaded to the web site maps in April. Next phase is looking at under and over provisions. No promises on expenditure but minds are open.

Flood damage is now costed at £15m, and work will take some time. Some items may not ever get done. Major volunteer effort particularly on towpaths, and this has been noted by DEFRA. Major bridge work at Elland on Rochdale will be funded by Government though LA. Slippage on west end of same canal is critical for opening of the canal this summer.

Dredging budget has been raided and also other major works budget, but this is not disastrous.

Sub group of boaters with deep boats is working with CRT on dredging plans, to ensure that expenditure is appropriate and needed.

David asked for confirmation that appointments to NAG are on a personal basis, and not representing NABO. CRT confirmed that NAG was not considered a replacement for the boating user group meetings recently suspended.

Alison reported on the Licensing meeting at the end of February. The main discussion was about mooring policy. CRT want premium moorings and say this is about bookability rather than revenue. They are also interested in setting up small groups of residential mooring to increase the stock.

Winter moorings over the last season were considered good, and the flexibility of taking separate months was liked. There is no intention to bring back roving moorings. Local Council pressure is still a factor for winter moorings and CRT may want to abandon scheme. NABO policy is to have winter moorings and we should press this.

The boaters survey was worked on and the questions reduced from 30 to 11 reducing the 'how are we doing' questions.

Berkhampstead moorings were discussed. Reports and plans from CRT were

MR

DF

MT

challenged, and it is apparent that the survey data do not support the need for change or 48 hour restrictions. CRT are silent. There is a feeling that there are plans to build in the park on the offside, that there is pressure to purge the canal in preparation.

It was noted that Julien Kennard from EA was present.

ii) CRT NUF in February.

Reports reflect those given in NAG above.

It was noted that CRT have removed 63 boats this year.

iii) CRT Council meeting

This was the first meeting after election so not great movement here. Boating reps are to have a meeting with Grimes.

iv) BSS

David reported on AC. The main item was complaints from examiner groups about the implications of survey work on CO alarms. This will get resolved at MC next week.

There is a meeting in March about risk assessment.

The next TC is in March.

David reported on the 2015 accident stats. The main issues are fires and man overboard. It was noted that despite the recorded accident, boating is very safe.

A straw poll was taken on the adoption of compulsory CO alarms. The meeting was evenly split.

Trevor advised that he wished to step down from BSS activities and also from BSI and NABO Council. Thanks for service was noted. Mike and David will consider the way forward. Alison mentioned that she was interested.

SR

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5)

Web matters

i) Web site software. The web site is now running on the latest available software in all categories. Backups are in place. The provider Heart had a major power failure in February and the site was down for a few hours. It happened in the day and we did not notice. Some users have lost data but we have been OK. Heart are behaving properly and there is no need to consider our position.

ii) Spam. There have been a few instances of mail going missing. The settings have been reset to be less aggressive, and we will monitor.

iii) Facebook and Twitter support. Silvia (Chris Pink's partner) is engaged to help with these systems. Agreed that David is working with here on Twitter as a start.

iv) Email to AOL. Phil reported loss of emails. David will check and test systems

DF

DF
DF

5)

Membership

i) Pamphlets. It was agreed that we would pass this to Chris Pink to see if he could come up with suitable graphics.

ii) The web site wording is poor at the moment and we particularly need to advertise our recent successes. No action since last meeting. E.g. EA firefighting, T and C, Stella election etc. Those leading these items please provide a couple of paragraphs.

iii) Renewal by email. members do request this, but we have no automated system as these are incompatible with paper renewals which most of our members require. David proposed to offer this on a manual basis by emailing pdf files of the renewal to those that request it. David also proposed that Association officers get renewal by email. Council approved.

RC

All

DF

9)

Finance

i) Next year budget. Helen has prepared a draft budget, using the agreed new

cost centres, along with some notes. Council are asked to review and pass comments (for example on legal or website or marketing costs) so that she can fine tune it in April. Included is an extra £500 in cost centre 14 (Other), to allow for as yet unknown costs in 2015/16 and as a contingency for re-allocation as necessary in 2016/17. This will disappear when final year end costs are known and the budget for next year is finalised.

All

ii) Current balances:

Barclays current account	£8,175.69
Barclays deposit account	£8,756.37
Santander current account	£ 704.73
PayPal account	£ 29.86

iv) Members' insurance scheme: We now have a good compromise. Dominic has located a broker who already has a specialist boat insurance operation, using a panel of insurers, and has negotiated a 7.5% discount for NABO members. This is CETA, with whom some members are already working; for them, the discount will be offered from their next renewal. They have set up a dedicated web link for NABO members which automatically deducts the discount from the premium. There is also a direct phone line for anyone who wishes to deal with their insurance this way.

CETA is unable to offer a commission to NABO but is able to pay REHutt a small percentage (still to be negotiated). Dominic will make a donation to NABO out of this amount, suggested on a quarterly basis.

Council approved the scheme

Helen will write a piece for the next NABO News and directly advise those members who kindly provided details of their current policy for the analysis exercise. She also suggested it is worth a special mailing, and include an extra bullet point on the recruitment leaflet which is being redesigned.

HH

v) Update on Santander

David's latest round of letters is producing results. He is following up by phone/email those members who have not reacted and are still paying correct amount into Santander, which is also meeting with some success. At this rate, he thinks we should be in a position to close the account before the end of 2016.

HH/DF

vi) 2015/16 Accounts. All Council members submit claims no later than 15 April for expenses incurred to the end of March 2016. If this is not possible, please at least advise Helen of provisional figures.

All

vii) Helen requests approval of £150 for VT software for James Steckerl, the Auditor – this is included in cost centre 9 along with the audit fee and stationery costs etc. Council approved. James is out cruising from April to October but hopefully he will have time and inclination to audit the current year's accounts within a reasonable time frame. Helen has provisionally arranged to meet around 6 May for handover of documents.

HH

viii) Expenses form. Redesigning as previously planned has proved too complicated! Helen proposing minor adjustments to the current form, which requires the claimant to allocate each expenditure item to the appropriate cost centre number. Council approved

David put it on the website and email it to all Council members for use from 1 April 2016.

DF

10)

NABO News

Articles for the April issue:

CRT plans for CC licences Mark
Traders report from Paul;
Loss of amenity at Warwick bar Alison
Mooring tips Nick Roberts
Ombudsman Andy Walker
April Fool – Peter with pics from Mike
2015 safety stats Peter
Mersey Gateway project David
Membership issues David

11 AOB

The next meeting of Council will be on 23rd April, venue TBA.

RC

DF 13/03/16