

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

Held at Wolverhampton Boat Club at 10.45am on Saturday 15th October 2016

Present: Mike Rodd (Chair), Richard Carpenter, Phil Goulding, Helen Hutt, Mark Tizard, Stephen Peters, Peter Fellows, Paul Howland, Alison Tuck

- 1) Apologies for absence: Stella Ridgway, David Fletcher
- 2) **Minutes of last meeting**

Minutes for 4 September 2016 approved unanimously. Actions are complete unless recorded below or updated in agenda.

2) 3(ii) Facilities. No follow up as yet

2) 5(iii) Promotional leaflets. Richard to finalise and liaise with Chris Pink to produce artwork.

3 (i) Mike's letter to CRT. Acknowledged but there is evidently no interest in feed-back from any group, not just NABO.

3 (ii) CRT's progress on legal matters. Agreed CRT is losing the PR battle. In particular, Matthew Symonds is weak in media interviews. MR/SR will continue to follow up at subsequent meetings with Ian Rogers.

4 (v) CRT Council/boater reps. Stella will continue to attend although the meetings appear ineffectual.

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

i) Mike reported on 2-hour meeting with Ian Rogers on 14 October. CRT (M Grimes) will be looking in depth at licensing pricing structure, in order to simplify the system; this will include possible zonal charging and boats being rented out privately. On the latter, Alison described 4 web sites promoting peer-to-peer lettings, virtually impossible for CRT to monitor. Mike emphasised that NABO should be involved. Other points of discussion: dredging adjacent to visitor moorings ("taken on board"); getting a winter mooring on a 6-month licence; communications. However, there was agreement to hold regular meetings.

ii) CRT / legal matters. No progress due to Geoffrey's illness. Mark reported on two cases where boats had been removed by CRT and the owners were claiming costs to get them reinstated. CRT had spent more than £60,000 defending their action – far exceeding the actual costs involved.

Nearly all boaters who had been issued a 6 month licence had now got a 12 month one. One exception was a lady with mental health issues on the K&A, who had refused help initially and been evicted. Sean Williams had not been made aware of this final action. Lots of adverse publicity.

iii) NINF meeting, 20th October, co-ordinated by Michael Stimpson: Focus on London and related waterways. Agreed that a request of London branch of NBTA (not K&A people) to join could be considered. Mike to phone Mike Docherty. **MR**

iv) AGM

One new nomination received, Paul Howland. Stephen and Geoffrey are standing down and Trevor has already resigned. Mark would continue on Council but not as Vice-Chair. Simon Robbins standing down as London Rep. In view of losing several Council members at one go, Richard suggested election should be on a rolling basis, so that only one-third would retire in any one year.

Richard would send formal email notification to all members 21 days before the AGM. Peter asked whether it would be logistically better to move the AGM to a later date to coincide better with NABO News. To be discussed again after this year's AGM.

It was agreed that a new post of Press Officer (non-Council position) should be created. Call to be included in next Bulletin and NABO News. Mark would prepare an article.

We also need an appeal for a new Legal rep to replace Geoffrey. **ALL MT/DF/PF**

4) **Reports on Key issues**

i) Report on NAG meetings.

David had circulated written notes about his NAG meeting; this group is working well and achieving results.

In her group, Alison reported there was criticism from the Chair, Mike Annan, of people 'bringing their own agendas' to the meeting, and there was friction between 'Old NAG' and 'New NAG', perhaps because of the success of NABO's Facebook group which airs issues instantly and is ahead of the game. The four issues discussed were:

1. A review of enforcement communications, which were generally agreed to be confusing and difficult for boaters to follow up ;
2. Attempt to speed up enforcement process re non-compliant renters – they are given 28 days to respond, then 28 days to desist, then 28 days before they go into the enforcement process. But if boat has no name or number visible CRT can only attach a note. CRT is planning to introduce a new category of licence for landlords without a home mooring but this will not solve the problem;
3. Proposed new licensing pricing structure – eg wide beams to be charged more (NABO agree in principle), prompt payment discount to go, different charges for different zones. NAG had already produced a comprehensive report but where is it?;
4. Winter moorings – system has crashed again when bookings opened but more sold and for longer than last year, raising £180,000 in first week. But a restricted licence could mean no winter mooring and Mark said this could possibly penalise the wrong people if a boat had not been able to cover the required mileage before winter mooring began. Also, he has knowledge of a boater being refused a

winter mooring after (probably wrongly) being issued with a warning letter, whilst still in possession of a 12 month licence. Mark to draft a letter to CRT.

Alison asked for some positive comments about CRT. Agreed that staff on the ground were excellent, it was back office operations which caused problems. **Alison to write a piece for NABO News. MT**

ii) EA/CRT merger.

Mike reported that CRT appeared to be less positive than previously. If there was a separate budget for flood relief, would CRT sub-contract that element? SR had talked to new Chairman of Trustees, who is concerned that if the lock keepers go, who deals with flood control. Watch this space.

iii) Boater reps on CRT Council.

Nothing to report except for a lack of empathy and knowledge.

iv) CRT NUF in September.

Paul reported that this had been unproductive, apart from networking afterwards. It had emerged that Fazeley office would close and move to new premises in Birmingham, and eventually Milton Keynes office may also move to Birmingham.

v) CRT Boaters Reps

Stella had made contact with reps but there was nothing to report. Mike will continue to represent Mon&Brec subsequent to Brian Forder's death. Phil offered to cover the Midlands area if required. New Rep needed for London to replace Simon Robbins. NABO has no disabled rep.

vi) RCTA.

Paul reported that 4 Council members had resigned, including himself, and that 16 volunteers were now involved. Markets were doing reasonably well but trading for all was down at the moment.

vii)CBOA, no report.

5) **Web matters**

i) Web site software. Council approved the expenditure of £94.99 for renewal. **DF**

6) **BSS**

i) No meetings to report on.

ii) Mike would be attending technical committee meeting next week. Important issue for discussion was the use of higher powered electrical devices and the lack of qualified electricians to approve them. **MT**

7) **Finance**

i) Helen presented the half-year budget comparison which showed an excess of income over expenditure of £2,013. Helen to check with Richard on advertising income from Midland Chandlers.

HH

ii) Auditor. Helen confirmed that Colin Walker had agreed to take over. Thanks to James Steckerl to be recorded at AGM.

iii) Current balances:

Barclays current account	£6,052
Barclays deposit account	£13,764
PayPal account	£134

iv) Barclays deposit account interest rate has fallen to 0%.

v) Helen to amend Barclays bank mandate to reflect Stephen's resignation from Council in November. **HH**

8) **Membership update**

Insurance scheme: Helen reported 15 more click through's and 4 more quotes since last time but no more sales.

Through NABO News we are now suggesting members phone first for a quote and Helen has asked if CETA can also provide stats for phone calls in future.

7) **NABO News**

Peter suggested two more issues this year, one in early November and then a 'Winter' issue. Council agreed.

Articles for the November issue, deadline 28 October:

NAG reports (Mike)

Winter moorings and Marsworth facilities mooring (Mark)

The positives about CRT (Alison)

Roving trader article (via Paul)

Smoke alarms (Peter)

Call for new reps, press officer, legal rep, and thanks to Geoffrey (Peter)


Bude Canal (Helen)

Stoppages and vegetation issues

Cars in the canal

8) **AOB**

The next meeting of Council will be on 10th November following the AGM at
Wolverhampton BC HH 16/10/16


12/11/2016