



MONMOUTHSHIRE AND BRECON CANAL - CRUMLIN ARM WORKING GROUP

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, PENALLTA HOUSE
YSTRAD MYNACH ON MONDAY, 17TH MAY 2010 AT 10.00 AM**

PRESENT:

Mr. R.J. Dommett – Vice Chairman Presiding

Councillors:

Miss L. Ackerman, M. Davies, M.H. Newman, M.G. Parker, Mrs. B.M. Toomer

By invitation: Councillor Mrs. P. Griffiths

Together with:

K. Kinsey (Principal Engineer - Consultancy), N. Liversuch (Manager, Countryside and Landscape Services), R. Davies (European Officer), G. Gordon (Senior Assistant Solicitor), H. C. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

Mr. R.J. Dommett - Monmouthshire, Brecon and Abergavenny Canals Trust

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R. Davies, D.M. Gray, K. James, S. Jenkins and Mrs. B.M. Toomer.

2. COUNCILLOR STAN JENKINS

The Chairman advised that Councillor Stan Jenkins was currently in hospital and it was agreed that the best wishes of the Group be sent to him.

3. MINUTES - 25TH NOVEMBER 2010

The minutes of the meeting held on 25th November 2010 were approved as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

4. Funding Update (minute no. 6)

Mr. Davies reported that this potential project was now named 'Water-Works', and after the Funding Sub-Group meeting with the Welsh European Funding Office in March 2010, the Group was encouraged to submit the bid on a reserve basis under Priority 4 Theme 3 of the

Convergence Programme. Officers across the Partnership have continued to develop the Expression of Interest and are looking at possible avenues to help fund the project. It is anticipated that this will be submitted by the end of the month.

The project is targeted to extend the navigable stretch of the Canal, and the total cost will be in the region of £10m. The grant rate is approximately 60% and the Partnership will be looking for £4m match funding contribution. While challenging, Officers are looking at various funding opportunities, including using any canal and land value, retrospective canal spend, and Welsh Assembly Governments Targeted Match Funding pot, to estimate the direct financial implications on the Partnership.

Torfaen County Borough Council continues to act as lead on the submission and any successful bid. The Welsh European Funding Office has indicated that it is monitoring approved projects under this Priority to confirm commitments and spend predictions. Members were reminded that development to date places no commitment on the Partnership, but should the application progress beyond reserve, the Council will be required to consider the future strategy and implications of this project and the Canal in general.

5. Monmouthshire, Brecon and Abergavenny Canals Trust Regeneration Managers Report (minute no. 7)

Mr. Dommett advised that the application submitted in December for funds from the Welsh Council for Volunteer Action (The Intermediate Labour Market 'ILM' Programme) was not successful (judged at 50% of the 60% required). A further application has been submitted to the WCVA. Their receipt has been acknowledged and the outcome is awaited.

REPORT OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following items.

6. Maintenance Update

Canal Channel - following consultation with the Ecologist the weed cutting/channel clearance regime for the coming year is to be reduced to two visits. Clearance will be undertaken in July and October 2010. Mr. Kinsey reported that he would be meeting with the Ecologist later in the day to review the target areas.

Grass Maintenance - the first cut of this season has been delayed by a month and will be undertaken in May, subsequent cuts will be undertaken on 24th June, 20th July, 7th August and 11th September and 19th October 2010.

7. 2009/2010 Works Programme

Towpath - the sections of towpath, Moriah Hill to Gelli Avenue, Navigation Road to Penrhiw Bridge, Temperance Hill to Darran Road, Darran Road Bridge to Green Meadow Bridge and Green Meadow Bridge to Pontywaun Bridge, have been surfaced with a tarmac finish.

Access Enhancement - improvement works to the access points at Thistle Way, Navigation Road, Moriah Bridge, The Prince of Wales Pub, Darran Road, Green Meadow Bridge and Halls Road were completed. The scope of works at all locations included the installation of vehicle and motorcycle barriers and areas of block paving. Where the location required it, litter and dog fouling bins were also installed.

Water Control - the installation of stank boards at Pontywaun Bridge is at present on going. The installation of stank boards at key locations will allow the easy compartmentalisation of the canal to deal with future flooding and leak issues.

8. 2010/2011 Works Programme

Towpath - the sections of towpath from Pontygraig Bridge to Harry Roberts Bridge have been identified for surfacing with a tarmac finish.

Access Enhancement - improvement works to the access points at Harry Roberts Bridge and Pontywaun Feed are programmed for completion this financial year. The scope of works at all locations included the installation of vehicle and motorcycle barriers and areas of block paving. Where the location required it, litter and dog fouling bins were also installed.

Water Control - the installation of stank boards and depth gauges at Green Meadow Bridge; Penrhiw Bridge, Moriah Hill Bridge and Darran Road Bridge are programmed for this financial year. The depth gauges will assist in monitoring the depth along the whole length of the canal and the installation of stank boards at these locations will allow the easy compartmentalisation of the canal to deal with future flooding and leak issues.

Advanced Design - advanced design works for relining schemes at Pontywaun Viaduct and the section of canal downstream of the viaduct, down to Pontywaun Bridge, are planned in order to have scheme cost surety and allow future funding bids.

9. Funding

Capital - there is no capital budget allocation for the 2010/2011 financial year.

Revenue - the 2010/2010 budget was fixed at £190,900. Expenditure under this heading is allocated to cover the cost of grass and channel maintenance, tree maintenance, general cleansing, towpath repair, management cost and emergency response.

External Funding - The Countryside and Landscape Group secured external funding from WEFO in the sum of £50,000.00 for access enhancement. Elements of the works identified above have been funded from this source.

10. Boats on the Canal

Owners removed all boats from the canal last year and to date no applications have been received to put their boats back. It was confirmed that should an application for a licence be received it must be accompanied by the appropriate liability insurance and boat safety scheme certificate.

11. WELSH WATERWAYS FESTIVAL - 29/31ST MAY 2010

Mr. Dommatt advised that the Welsh Waterways Festival 2010, incorporating the 2010 IWA National Trailboat Festival, is to be held from the 29th - 31st May 2010 at Kimberley Park in Newport and distributed leaflets advertising the event.

The Festival is being hosted by the Monmouthshire, Brecon and Abergavenny Canals Trust. Two boats will be running trips on all three days through the four locks (approximately three miles) and there will be stalls and live entertainment, providing something for the whole family. Several boat entry forms have already been received and prizes will be presented for specific categories.

Mr. Dommett report that restoration works continue and a meeting has been scheduled to discuss the future programme, including works from 14 Locks to the underpass.

12. Fishing Club License Extension

Mr. Kinsey made reference to a request from the Angling Club to extend their fishing rights from Manor Road to Harry Roberts Bridge and, in noting that the Club are prepared to stock that area for their purposes, it was agreed that the request should be allowed. A query was raised with regards to the handling of the fishing stock when portions of the canal are to be dammed and drained in order that maintenance works can be undertaken and Mr. Kinsey reported that they are removed by a contractor and replaced once the works have been completed.

11. Motorcycle Inhibitor Barriers

Mr. Kinsey referred to the motorcycle barriers which have been erected following complaints received in relation to the illegal use of motorcycles along the towpath and to two complaints that have been made regarding their siting. The first was more of a general complaint whilst the second referred to the inability to travel through the barriers with a double buggy. It was noted that these barriers have been erected in other areas and it has been proven that it is possible to pass a double buggy under the barrier. As such it was agreed that the barriers remain in situ and the situation monitored.

The meeting closed at 11.00 am.