



MONMOUTHSHIRE AND BRECON CANAL - CRUMLIN ARM WORKING GROUP - 22ND OCTOBER 2015

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE CANAL

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES

1. MAINTENANCE UPDATE

1.1 Canal Channel

Weed cutting/channel maintenance was started in September 2015 but unfortunately the cutting boat suffered a breakdown and consequently only the section upstream of Gelli Avenue was completed. The boat is due to return later in October 2015 to finish the cutting works.

Officers from the Council's Countryside department, under the direction of the Senior Ecologist and Invasive Plant Species Officer, have been removing areas of invasive flora from the canal channel and have treated all areas of known knotweed along the canal corridor.

1.2 Grass Maintenance

The final cut of the season is programmed for the end of October 2015. During this cutting exercise, all grass will be cut down to the water's edge and any tree saplings cut and removed.

2. 2015/2016 WORKS PROGRAMME

2.1 Towpath

No works planned for this year.

2.2 Access Enhancement

No works planned for this year.

2.3 Water Control

The Cwm Byr stream will be the subject of a verbal report in the meeting.

2.4 Dredging

Consideration is being given to dredging the section of canal downstream of Green Meadow Bridge early in the new year.

2.5 **Tree Maintenance**

A tree survey over the full length of the canal is to be undertaken prior to Christmas 2015, with a view for any identified works to be undertaken early in the New Year.

2.6 **External Funding**

Officers within CCBC's Economic Development Section are currently working with neighbouring authorities to compile bids in attempt to secure funding for further improvements at key areas along the Canal. It is understood that this is progressing well, and in this respect the use of the Canal capital funding as match funding is being considered.

2.7 **Channel Leak Repair**

The second phase of works to complete the relining up to the downstream end of the aqueduct (and possibly the aqueduct itself) will be tendered in November 2015. It is hoped that permission can be secured to undertake works to the aqueduct, and to this end a planning application will be submitted shortly. The works are now programmed to start in January 2016. This start date has been delayed to allow the capital funding to be used as match funding, should Officers be successful in securing external funding.

2.8 **Emergency Works**

There have been no defects requiring emergency action identified during this period.

3. **FUNDING**

3.1 **Capital**

A capital budget allocation for 2014/15 was under spent by £17,000 which has been carried forward to the 2015/16 budget. The budget allocation for 2015/16 has been confirmed as £212,000, plus the £17,000 carry over, giving a total budget of £229,000. This funding will be used to complete the channel leak repair at Pontywaun.

3.2 **Revenue**

The 2014/2015 budget allocation was £126,500. This was under-spent by £361.00, and the budget for 2015/16 is confirmed as £128,454. Expenditure using this budget will be focused on tree and channel maintenance.

For the financial year 2016/17 onwards it is proposed to offer 20% of the revenue budget up as a Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) saving. The revised budget going forward would then be £100,000. This is only possible because of the recent capital funding received which has allowed improvements along a number of problematic sections of the canal, and anticipated future capital funding.

4. **BOATS**

4.1 No update in this respect.

5. **CANAL MAINTENANCE**

5.1 All future routine maintenance works will now be undertaken by CCBC Network Contracting Services. Major works will be procured via tender.

Author: K J Kinsey, Principal Engineer