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**Date: 17th July 2019**

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal - Crumlin Arm Working Group** will be held in the **Sirhowy Room - Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Thursday, 25th July, 2019** at **5.00 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda. Councillors and the public wishing to speak on any item can do so by making a request to the Chair. You are also welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, both these requests require a minimum notice period of 3 working days, and a simultaneous translation will be provided if requested.

All Committee meetings are open to the Press and Public, observers and participants are asked to conduct themselves with respect and consideration for others. Please note that failure to do so will result in you being asked to leave the meetings and you may be escorted from the premises.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chrissy'.

**Christina Harrhy**  
INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

## AGENDA

- |   | Pages |
|---|-------|
| 1 To appoint a Chair and Vice-Chair for the ensuing year. |       |
| 2 To receive apologies for absence.                       |       |

A greener place Man gwyrddach

Correspondence may be in any language or format | Gallwch ohebu mewn unrhyw iaith neu fformat



3 Declarations of Interest.

Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution, and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.

To receive and note the following minutes: -

- 4 Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal - Crumlin Arm Working Group held on 28th February 2019. 1 - 4
- 5 To receive an update on Matters Relating to the Canal. 5 - 8

**Circulation:**

M. Davies, A. Hussey, L. Jeremiah, G. Johnston, Mrs A. Leonard, Ms P. Leonard, B. Owen, D.W.R. Preece, J. Simmonds, C. Thomas, A. Whitcombe (Chair) and R. Whiting

Monmouthshire, Brecon and Abergavenny Canals Trust – Mr R.J. Domett and Mr B. Illman

Cabinet Member: N. George (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services)

And Appropriate Officers

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## **MONMOUTHSHIRE AND BRECON CANAL - CRUMLIN ARM WORKING GROUP**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON  
THURSDAY 28TH FEBRUARY 2019 AT 5.30 P.M.**

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PRESENT:

Councillor A. Whitcombe - Chair

Mr R. Dommett (Monmouthshire, Brecon and Abergavenny Canals Trust) - Vice Chair

Councillors:

M. Davies, Mrs A. Leonard, D.W.R. Preece, J. Simmonds, R. Whiting

Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services - Councillor N. George

Together with:

K. Kinsey (Acting Engineering Projects Group Manager), R. Barrett (Committee Services Officer)

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A. Hussey, L. Jeremiah, G. Johnston, Ms P. Leonard, B. Owen, C. Thomas and Mr B. Illman (Monmouthshire, Brecon and Abergavenny Canals Trust)

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

### **3. MINUTES – 18TH OCTOBER 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th October 2018 were approved as a correct record.

### **REPORTS OF OFFICERS**

Consideration was given to the following report.

#### 4. UPDATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE CANAL

Kevin Kinsey (Acting Engineering Projects Group Manager) presented the report, which detailed the current and planned maintenance and any capital works planned for the forthcoming year. The report set out details of current funding availability and outlined any current operational issues regarding the usage and the condition of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal – Crumlin Arm.

Members were updated on the range of subjects relating to the Canal as set out in the report and Mr Kinsey responded to queries from the Group in turn.

##### **Section 5.1 - Maintenance Update**

**Canal Channel** - Weed cutting/channel maintenance for 2019 has not been planned as yet, but will be considered later in the year in consultation with all relevant stakeholders. Mr Kinsey explained that all appropriate steps will be reviewed with ecologists and other colleagues to monitor the safe and effective clearance of the channel given the accidental fish kill incident in 2015. In response to a Member's query, it was confirmed that the works would not prevent canoeists from using the Canal.

**Grass Maintenance** - The first cut of the season is planned for March 2019, with the exact date being weather dependent, but it could extend later into the month if the cold snap of 2018 is repeated. Mr Kinsey gave a reminder of the new cutting regime between Manor Way in Risca and the Harry/Henry Roberts Bridge in Pontymister, which allows for a strip of foliage to grow to the water's edge to provide cover for wildlife.

Members referred to the success of the new regime and suggested that consideration could be given to extending this cutting style across the Manor Road stretch and Prince of Wales/ Temperance Hill area, or even extend the regime right across the entire section of the Canal. Following discussion of the matter, it was unanimously agreed that Mr Kinsey would raise the suggestions with colleagues in Parks to seek their views on the practicalities of extending the new cutting regime further across the Canal.

##### **Section 5.2 – 2019/2020 Works Programme**

**Towpath** - There are no planned towpath works for 2019.

**Access Enhancement** - There are no planned access maintenance works for 2019.

**Water Control** - It is proposed to undertake cleansing of all culverted sections of the canal during March/ April, which will allow for a greater ease of water flow across the Canal and down to its counterpart in Newport. There are plans to install provision for stop boards at key locations along together with depth gauges, and installation of a new control valve at the Manor Road emergency feed is currently under consideration and is likely to be in place before the summer.

It was noted that these works are being implemented to improve control measures and address the overflow at Manor Road, particularly because the Manor Road feed is the only controlled feed in the Risca area (as the Council do not have access to control the feed at Fernlea/Gelli Avenue). Works to the Nant Carn Feed are programmed for mid-summer, which will improve draw-off capability during periods of dry weather. Members discussed the history and locality of the Canal feeds and were interested to learn that there was originally one further up the valley at Penyfan Pond.

**Dredging** - Dredging of the Green Meadows Bridge to the Drill Halls Channel is planned for

early 2020. A Member asked if there had been any increases in silt along the Pontywaun section (arising from fires in the Cwmcarn Forest Drive area). Mr Kinsey explained that there was no evidence of any issues in this area but complaints had been received regarding silt in the section down past Green Meadows Bridge.

**Tree Maintenance** - Extensive tree maintenance works are currently ongoing; this has been made necessary by the discovery of Ash Dieback over the full length of the canal. This is likely to have a significant impact on the wooded fringes of the canal. To date this work has been completed along the section between Halls Road Pontywaun and Navigation Road, Risca. It is anticipated that the remaining length of the canal down to Harry Roberts Bridge will be completed before the end of March.

**External Funding** - Officers within CCBC's Regeneration and Planning Division as part of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal Adventure Triangle bid have successfully secured funding to the value of £678,571.00. All works associated with this funding are to be completed by December 2020 and Officers are currently looking at priorities in this respect.

**Channel Leak Repair** - The third phase of works is being designed at present and will be tendered in the late spring or early summer. The length of Canal to be addressed in this phase will extend from the downstream terminus of Phase 1 down to the Pontywaun overbridge. There is currently an issue with water loss at the aqueduct and Officers are reviewing options to deal with this, and as such it is planned to implement remedial works at the same time as the Phase 3 works. It was noted that care has to be taken in determining the type of remedial work and materials to be applied to the aqueduct exterior as it is a listed structure under Cadw.

**Emergency Works** - There have been no defects requiring emergency action identified during this period, which shows the benefit of the continuing remedial works to vulnerable sections of the Canal over the last 15 years.

### **Section 5.3 – Funding**

**Capital** - A capital budget allocation for 2018/19 is £212k plus the £149k carry over from 2017/18, giving a total budget of £361k. Anticipated funding for 2019/20 is £212k which will be used to complete the Phase 3 channel lining works at Pontywaun, and applied as match funding for the Adventure Triangle. It was noted that the amount of funding combined is in the region of £1.2m which is positive news for the Canal.

**Revenue** - The budget for 2018/19 was £105k and current spend commitments should see this spent in full. Funding for 2019/20 forms part of the MTFP infrastructure savings for 2019/20 and as such will be reduced to £50k.

### **Section 5.4 – Boats**

Members were advised that there was no news to report in respect of the Islwyn Lily and no recent contact had been received from the Islwyn Canal Association (ICA).

In conclusion, it was noted that a full programme of works for the coming year has been identified with funding in place to achieve these objectives. Mr Kinsey offered to circulate the 3-Year Works Programme for the Canal to Members following the meeting and this was welcomed by Members.

A Member highlighted continuing vehicle damage to the Penrhiw Bridge in Risca and Mr Kinsey confirmed he would speak to Traffic Management regarding potential preventative measures.

Mr Kinsey was thanked for his update and for responding to Members' queries during the course of his presentation.

## **5. UPDATE FROM MR RICHARD DOMMETT - MBACT**

Mr Dommett provided a verbal update on developments in respect of the Canal, and outlined towpath resurfacing works between the Harry Roberts Bridge and Malpas in Newport, and Ty Coch to Llantarnam in Torfaen, all of which have been funded through the Adventure Triangle.

Mr Dommett updated the Group on MBACT's recent campaign opposing the implementation of car parking charges at Fourteen Locks Canal Centre in Rogerstone, and highlighted concerns surrounding the potential detrimental impact to visitor numbers (and particularly for users of the café) as a result of these charges.

The Group were also updated regarding MBACT's new Community Boat which will be sited at Goytre Wharf. The Trust have purchased an old canal boat which will be refurbished for use as a Community Boat resource. It will seat 38 passengers, be eco-friendly and operated by electric motor, and be fitted with a wheelchair lift. It is hoped that the licence for the boat will be secured following the Easter holidays. Members welcomed the news of this exciting project and were invited by Mr Dommett to visit Goytre Wharf and view the new boat in the near future.

The Chair thanked those present for their attendance and contributions and the meeting closed at 6.00 p.m.

The next meeting of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal – Crumlin Arm Working Group will be held on Thursday 25th July 2019.



## MONMOUTHSHIRE AND BRECON CANAL – CRUMLIN ARM WORKING GROUP – 25TH JULY 2019

**SUBJECT:** UPDATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE CANAL

**REPORT BY:** INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Canal Working Group Members on all matters relating to the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal – Crumlin Arm.

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report details the current and planned maintenance and any capital works planned for the forthcoming year. Details are given on current funding availability and a general statement is provided outlining any current operational issues regarding the usage and the condition of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal – Crumlin Arm.

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the contents of the report be noted

### 4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 For information only

### 5. THE REPORT

#### 5.1 MAINTENANCE UPDATE

##### 5.1.1 Canal Channel

Weed cutting/channel maintenance for 2019 is not planned as yet. This will be considered later in the year in consultation with all relevant stake holders.

##### 5.1.2 Grass Maintenance

The first cut of the season was undertaken in March and then on a 3 to 4 weekly cycle up until the final cut planned for September/October. The amended cutting regime was implemented in March and to date no adverse comments have been received.

## **5.2. 2019/2020 WORKS PROGRAMME**

### **5.2.1 Towpath**

There are no planned towpath works for 2019

### **5.2.2 Access Enhancement**

There are no planned access maintenance works for 2019

### **5.2.3 Water Control**

The proposed cleansing of all culverted sections of the canal planned for March/April, and installation of stop boards at key locations along the Canal, together with depth gauges was not progressed due to resource and funding issues.

### **5.2.4 Dredging**

Dredging of the Green Meadows Bridge to the Drill Halls Channel is now on hold due to funding issues.

### **5.2.5 Tree Maintenance**

The extensive tree maintenance works necessitated by the discovery of Ash Dieback over the full length of the canal are now complete. There are no further phases of maintenance planned, only that in reaction to tree falls.

### **5.2.6 External Funding**

Officers within CCBC's Regeneration and Planning Division as part of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal Adventure Triangle bid have successfully secured funding to the value of £678,571.00. All works associated with this funding are to be completed by December 2020. Officers are currently looking at priorities in this respect.

### **5.2.7 Channel Leak Repair**

The third phase of works is being designed at present and will be tendered in the autumn. The length of Canal to be addressed in this phase will extend from the downstream terminus of Phase 1 down to the Pontywaun overbridge. Phase four works planned for the upper section of the deeps is to be combined with phase three and issued as one contract.

There is currently an issue with water loss at the aqueduct and officers are reviewing options to deal with this, and as such it is planned to implement remedial works at the same time as the phase 3 works.

### **5.2.8 Emergency Works**

The installation of a clay bund was undertaken in early July to alleviate the issue of low water resulting from the leak at Pontywaun aqueduct. The bund was positioned slightly upstream of the secondary intake to allow the feed to be turned on and bring water levels back up to normal level.

## **5.3. FUNDING**

### **5.3.1 Capital**

A capital budget allocation for 2019/20 is £212k plus the £361k carry over from 2018/19, giving a total budget of £573k. This funding will be used to complete the Phase 3 channel



lining works at Pontywaun/Phase lining the Deeps, and match funding for the Adventure Triangle funding mentioned above.

### 5.3.2 Revenue

The budget for 2019/20 is £54,550 and current spend commitments should see this spent in full. Funding for 2019/20 forms part of the MTFP infrastructure savings for 2019/20.

## 5.4. BOATS

5.4.1 No update in this respect.

## 5.5 Conclusion

A full programmed of works for the coming year has been identified with funding in place to achieve these objectives.

## 6. ASSUMPTIONS

6.1 No assumptions have been made regarding the information contained in this report.

## 7. LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES

7.1 No requirements in this respect, information only

### 7.2 Corporate Plan 2018-2023.

The reports content contributes towards or impacts the Corporate Well-being Objectives, which are:

Objective 5 - Creating a county borough that supports a healthy lifestyle in accordance with the sustainable Development Principle within the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The canal provides a linear park suitable for users of all abilities who wish to engage in various forms of activity

Objective 6 - Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being. The canal provides a linear park suitable for users of all abilities who wish to engage in various forms of activity

## 8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

8.1 This report contributes to the following Well-being Goals as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act:-

- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language

It is also consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act in that we will seek to consider the long-term impact of the management of the canal and its impact on residents, service users and visitors and ensure that the Council as a public body meets its regulatory duties and corporate objectives.

**9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no equalities implications

**10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no financial implications.

**11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no personnel implications.

**12. CONSULTATIONS**

12.1 There is no requirement to undertake consultation given the nature of this report.

**13. STATUTORY POWER**

13.1 No requirements in this respect, information only.

Author: Kevin Kinsey, Principal Engineer, kinsek@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: None