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Date: 13th June 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

A multi-locational meeting of the **Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal - Crumlin Arm Working Group** will be held in Penallta House, and via Microsoft Teams on **Thursday, 22nd June, 2023 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. A simultaneous translation will be provided on request.

Members of the public or Press may attend in person at Penallta House or may view the meeting live via the following link: <https://civico.net/caerphilly>

This meeting will be live-streamed and a recording made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. Therefore the images/audio of those individuals speaking will be publicly available to all via the recording on the [Council's website](#).

Yours faithfully,

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

Christina Harrhy
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

AGENDA

	Pages
1 To receive apologies for absence.	

A greener place Man gwyrddach



2 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 approve and sign the following minutes: -

- | | | |
|---|--|--------|
| 3 | Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal - Crumlin Arm Working Group held on 2nd March 2023. | 1 - 4 |
| 4 | Update on Matters Relating to the Canal. | 5 - 10 |
| 5 | To receive an update from MBACT (verbal). | |

Circulation:

Councillors N. George, A. Leonard, P. Leonard, B. Owen, D.W.R. Preece, J. Simmonds, A. Whitcombe (Chair), K. Woodland and C. Wright

Monmouthshire, Brecon and Abergavenny Canals Trust – Rev. J. Collier and L. Gauntlett

Relevant Cabinet Member: C. Morgan

And Appropriate Officers

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MONMOUTHSHIRE AND BRECON CANAL - CRUMLIN ARM WORKING GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE
AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON MONDAY 2ND MARCH 2023 AT 5.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillors:

N. George, P. Leonard, B. Owen, J. Simmonds, A. Whitcombe, K. Woodland and
C. Wright

Cabinet Member for Waste, Leisure and Green Spaces: Councillor C. Morgan

Together with:

C. Adams (Highways Engineering Group Manager) J. Pitman (Senior Assistant Engineer), S.
Stook (Principal Engineer), A. Jones (Committee Services Officer), J. Thomas (Committee
Services Officer)

Representing Monmouthshire, Brecon, and Abergavenny Canals Trust –Reverend J. Collier
(Chair of MBACT) and L. Gauntlett (MBACT)

Also present:

Also present: Mr R. Wysom (Islwyn Canal Association) and A.L. Perchard.

RECORDING, FILMING AND VOTING ARRANGEMENTS

All present were reminded that the meeting was being live-streamed and recorded and
would be made available following the meeting via the Council's website – [Click Here to
View](#). Members were advised that voting on decisions would be taken via Microsoft Forms.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D.W.R. Preece, A. Leonard together
with B. Smith (Regeneration Projects Officer)

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor C. Morgan declared a personal interest in Agenda Items 6 and 7 as a member of
the Inland Waterways Association, as a private boat owner.

3. TO APPOINT A VICE-CHAIR TO THE MONMOUTHSHIRE AND BRECON CANAL – CRUMLIN ARM WORKING GROUP

The Committee were advised that Mr Richard Dommatt the Vice-Chair had left MBACT. Therefore, this has left the position of Vice-Chair vacant. Reverend J. Collier nominated Lindsay Gauntlett (MBACT) to be appointed as the new Vice-Chair. The nomination was moved and seconded and Lindsay Gauntlett was appointed as Vice Chair of the Canal Group for the ensuing year. By a show of hands (and in noting there were 6 For, 0 Against and 0 abstentions) this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that Lindsay Gauntlett be appointed as vice-chair of the Monmouthshire and Brecon canal – Crumlin arm working group for the ensuing year.

4. MINUTES – 25TH JULY 2022

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal - Crumlin Arm Working Group held on 25th July 2022 be approved as a correct record. By a show of hands (and in noting there were 5 For, 0 Against and 1 Abstentions) this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal - Crumlin Arm Working Group held on 25th July 2022 be approved as a correct record.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

5. UPDATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE CANAL

Sarah Stook (Principal Engineer) 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.

The Officer summarised her report and also provided Members with further updates which had been received following the report being written.

Members were advised that in relation to the Manor Road emergency feed, the new Officer in Welsh Water who is responsible for this area has managed to find several new properties that are illegally connected to the culvert. However, they have no powers to make the residents take out the connections. Therefore, the next step is to have a meeting with the NRW, Welsh Water, Environmental Health and drainage colleagues, building control and possibly Housing Officers, if any of the properties connected are Council owned properties.

The Officer also advised Members that a new water control valve has been installed on the Darren culvert. The valve that has been installed is a Pen Stock Valve which has a sliding door mechanism, which needs to be operated manually. This will be integral going forward for managing water levels downstream.

The Chair thanked Miss Stook for her detailed report and updates and Members were given the opportunity to ask questions.

A Member raised his concern regarding the low water at Fourteen Locks which crosses over into Newport City Council's section of the canal. Miss Stook assured the Committee that since the repair of the Darren culvert the flow of water down to Newport has greatly improved but we continue to inspect and monitor water levels in the Caerphilly section of the canal routinely..

Lindsay Gauntlett (MBACT) updated the Committee Members that Newport City Council have bid for a sum of money for the canal repairs. However, at this time there is no certainty to how much will be allocated to the Crumlin Arm. The Members were also advised that Newport are investigating why the canal isn't holding water, and there are investigations underway to locate other water sources to divert into the canal.

The Chair thanked Lindsay Gauntlett for her update.

The Members were also assured that the aqueduct section of the canal near the Cwmcarn Scenic Drive is also under investigation. It was noted by Members this was a listed structure, therefore the Officer was hopeful that CADW would be onboard with the current plans to restore this structure. Regen team are exploring options for funding to help the investigation, but physical works would need to be bid for in the future.

Following discussion, the Canal Group noted the content of the report and thanked Miss Stook for her update.

The Chair noted that a request had been received from Mr Richard Wysom (Islwyn Canal Association) to address the Committee Members. Mr Wysom was welcomed to the meeting and was invited to address the Canal Group.

Mr Wysom advised Members, the 'Lily' had last been used on the canal in 2015, and at that time it struggled with navigation due to the build up of silt and trees. Mr Wysom suggested all of the canal needs to be cleared.

Mr Wysom also brought to the Committee Members attention the danger of electric scooters and bikes used along the towpath

The Chair thanked Mr Wysom for his comments and acknowledge the issue that all Local Authorities are having with the uses of electric scooters and bikes and requested that the Cabinet Members present in today's meeting take it back to their colleagues in Cabinet for discussion.

6. UPDATE FROM MBACT

Reverend John Collier (MBACT) provided a verbal update on recent MBACT developments and matters relating to the Canal.

Members were advised that MBACT are in the process of purchasing a truck saw which is a weed cutting machine and a pontoon which will allow work to be carried on both sides of the canal. MBACT are willing to allow the Councils to use this equipment.

Reverend John Collier also wished for his thanks to go on record for Sarah in relation to her excellent communication and the Council for the way in which they care about the canal.

The Canal Group thanked Reverend Collier and noted the details of the update.

The Chair thanked those present for their attendance and contributions and the meeting closed at 5.55 p.m.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd June 2023, they were signed by the Chair.

CHAIR



MONMOUTHSHIRE AND BRECON CANAL – CRUMLIN ARM WORKING GROUP – 22ND JUNE 2023

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE CANAL

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT

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 provided 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.
- 2.2 Members of the working group are asked to note that ensuring the integrity of the canal channel and connecting culverts thus maintaining water flows and levels is the priority of the Authority.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the working group note the contents of the report and the updates provided.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To provide members with an update of details of the current and planned maintenance and any capital works planned for the forthcoming year.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 MAINTENANCE UPDATE

5.1.1 Canal Channel

Weed cutting/channel maintenance for 2023 will be scheduled for the usual months - September/October. It should be noted that for this year's weed maintenance,

additional supervision will be included to ensure there is no material left obstructing the towpath causing a hazard to users. This additional element will be included due to issues in this respect being observed and raised in last year's weed cutting operations.

A contractor has been commissioned (due on site end of May 2023) to cleanse the Aqueduct and temporary bund section at the secondary feed at Pontywaun of all vegetation and detritus that has accumulated over the past several months. Isolated repairs to the cladding panel partially fixed to the reinforced concrete retaining wall has also been included.

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 2023. The amended cutting regime has been maintained throughout the canal corridor.

With specific reference to Temperance Hill section, a request has been made to Parks Department that advance notice of their attendance is provided. This is in order residents may remove personal vehicles from the verge areas for the team to have unobstructed access.

5.2. 2023/2024 WORKS PROGRAMME

5.2.1 Towpath

There are no planned towpath works for 2023/2024.

5.2.2 Access Enhancement

There are no planned access maintenance works for 2023/24.

5.2.3 Water Control

Since the repair of the Darran Culvert water levels have improved within the southern reaches of the canal and remained satisfactory.

Initial enquiries have been made to cleanse and inspect all culverted sections along the canal. This can be progressed subject to available resources and budget; however, it should be noted that there are no known issues with the flow of water through the culverted sections and as such this is not deemed as urgent.

Officers in Infrastructure have been advised that a new DCWW pollution prevention control officer will shortly be in contact to work with the authority to resolve the misconnections to the culvert at Manor Road.

5.2.4 Dredging

Dredging works at the three known problem areas north of the Darran were completed early April 2023. The Contractor also attended to localised high spots of silt north of Greenmeadow Bridge by general reprofiling using the arm and bucket of the machine.

The fourth location (Fernlea) will be scheduled for maintenance later in 2023/24 subject to available funding.

5.2.5 Tree Maintenance

Planned tree maintenance is progressing and being managed by the authority's Arboriculturalists. Reactive works to deal with tree falls is also ongoing.

5.2.6 External Funding

An opportunity for external funding titled the Biffa Award Partnership Grants Scheme was presented to officers in Infrastructure however, following scrutiny of the conditions for project eligibility it became apparent that it would not have been a viable option for the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal Crumlin Arm.

No other external funding for use on the canal has been secured for 2023/24 however, officers within CCBC Planning and Regeneration Division continually seek opportunities where appropriate.

5.2.7 Channel Leak Repair

Phase 5 re-lining works (from Greenmeadow Bridge approximately 500m north) remains a priority for the council (subject to securing external funding).

Investigations around the Strathaven overflow (within the Thistle Way to Manor Road Section) found some defects associated with the concrete overflow structure. These were repaired and officers will continue to monitor during adverse weather conditions.

It is anticipated that the leaking aqueduct may be attended to as design works progress for potential improvements to the head of the canal at Pontywaun (subject to the anticipated design works commission from the Planning and Regeneration Team)

5.2.8 Emergency Works

No emergency works to report.

5.3. FUNDING

5.3.1 Capital

The capital budget allocation for 2023/24 is now confirmed as £181.7k.

5.3.2 Revenue

The budget allocation for 2023/24 is £105k with an allocation of £100k from agreed reserves, totalling £205k for the current year.

5.4. BOATS

A meeting was held between CCBC Engineering Projects Group (EPG), the Canal Trust, and the volunteers of the Inland Waterways Recovery Group to discuss the reinstatement of the slipway at Halls Road Terrace. However, the slipway reinstatement sits more appropriately (in this case) with an external contractor. Officers in EPG can look for other opportunities for the volunteers and thank all that attended for the time and advice. The details for the slipway reinstatement are currently with a Contractor for pricing.

Licensing Department were updated early March 2023 on the dredging and planned reinstatement to the slipway at Halls Road Terrace, there are no other updates with respect to licensing.

Prior to the boats relaunch, it has been agreed that an officer from Engineering and Parks Departments undertake a joint walkover from the Darran to Pontywaun. This is to ensure there are no broken branches obstructing the water in the canal channel.

5.5 Conclusion

A full programme of works for the coming year is being developed subject to considerations relating to the slipway reinstatement costs and subject to available funding from the Capital and Revenue budgets together with potential external funding to achieve objectives.

It should be noted however, that reactive/emergency works will be undertaken and take precedence over planned works with respect to time and budget.

Note: CCBC's 5-year Canal Management Plan will soon be reviewed/updated to record any works undertaken and any priority changes. Copies will be forwarded for consultation as required.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

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

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Report is for information only.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The budget details are included in section 5.3 above and include a capital budget of £181.7k and revenue budget of £205k.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no personnel implications.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 Consultation as below for information only.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 No requirements in this respect, information only.

Author: Sarah Stook, Principal Engineer, stooksj@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Christina Harray – Chief Executive
Mark S Williams – Director
Marcus Lloyd – Head of Infrastructure and Waste Management
Rob Tranter – Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Stephen Harris – Head of Financial Services and S151 Officer
Rob Hartshorn – Head of Public Protection, Community and Leisure Services
Rhian Kyte – Head of Regeneration and Planning

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