



MONMOUTHSHIRE AND BRECON CANAL - CRUMLIN ARM WORKING GROUP

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON
THURSDAY 19TH OCTOBER 2017 AT 5.00 P.M.**

PRESENT:

Councillor A. Whitcombe - Chair

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

Councillors:

M. Davies, N. George, L. Jeremiah, G. Johnston, Mrs A. Leonard, B. Owen, J. Simmonds, C. Thomas, R. Whiting

Cabinet Member for Economy, Infrastructure, Sustainability and Wellbeing of Future Generations Champion - Councillor S. Morgan

Together with:

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

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A. Hussey, Ms P. Leonard and D.W.R. Preece.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. MINUTES - 22ND JUNE 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd June 2017 were approved as a correct record.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

4. MAINTENANCE UPDATE

Kevin Kinsey (Acting Engineering Projects Group Manager) presented a verbal update on matters relating to the Canal and responded to queries from the Group in turn.

Canal Channel - weed cutting/channel maintenance has been programmed for the end of October 2017. It was explained that the exercise will be closely monitored by Officers from Ecology and the Engineering Projects Group in view of the accidental fish kill incident which occurred in October 2015.

Grass Maintenance - the final cut of the season will be undertaken at the end of October, which will include the amended cutting patterns along the Manor Road section.

5. 2017/2018 WORKS PROGRAMME

Towpath - some areas of the towpath have recently been treated for weed growth.

Access Enhancement - General enhancement of green areas and maintenance of canal areas has been carried out.

Water Control - It is proposed to lower water levels to normal winter level to allow sufficient storage/free board within the Canal channel to deal with possible storm events and thus prevent flooding. Mr Richard Dommett (Monmouthshire, Brecon and Abergavenny Canals Trust) asked that he is made aware of this so that the reduced levels can be used to investigate current Canal issues at Fourteen Locks in Rogerstone.

Tree Maintenance - A tree survey over the full length of the Canal has been completed and works will be undertaken over the next months to cut back tree growth. This will include the tree at Henry Roberts Bridge. It was confirmed that reactive maintenance has recently been undertaken to deal with low lying branches obstructing passage along the Canal channel. In response to a Member's query, it was confirmed that priority will be given to damaged trees in the first instance, and those trees obstructing the towpaths and channels.

Channel Leak Repair - Mr Kinsey confirmed that the second phase of relining works to the Cwmcarn and Pontywaun aquaduct have been successfully completed. Consideration is being given toward the planning of a third phase of works, which will continue the relining works to the Pontywaun Bridge and will utilise a portion of the capital budget allocation for 2018/19. An application for external match funding to maximise the potential from this phase of the works is due to be submitted shortly.

Emergency Works – Remedial bridge maintenance works have recently been carried out to repair damage at Moriah Hill Bridge and Penrhiw Bridge in Risca.

Mr Kinsey was thanked for his update.

6. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2018

The meeting dates proposed within the agenda were agreed by Members.

Discussion took place regarding the start time for the Canal Group meetings. At the previous meeting, it had been noted that there has been low attendance for the 10.00 a.m. meetings, as several Members are unable to attend a morning session due to other commitments. The Canal Group therefore agreed to implement a 5.00 p.m. start time on a trial basis.

Members referred to the noticeable improvement in attendance following the move to an

evening session. Following discussion with the Chair and Cabinet Member, it was unanimously agreed that future meetings of the Canal Group be arranged for a 5.00 p.m. start time.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Dommatt advised Members of an all-day coach tour across the length of the Canal taking place on Wednesday 1st November 2017, which was being organised by Torfaen Council and the Canal and River Trust. All Canal Group Members were encouraged to attend, and it was noted that representatives from other local authorities and organisations involved with the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal would also be in attendance.

It was confirmed that details of the itinerary would be circulated to Members following the meeting in order to allow the necessary arrangements to be made.

Mr Dommatt also provided an update in respect of funding developments. He confirmed that the Heritage Lottery Fund application by MBACT to enable progression of the Five Locks project between Brecon and Cwmbran had been unsuccessful, but that there is potential to reapply at a later date. A £160k bid for Rural Development Programme funding for the restoration of the Cabin Lock at Ty Coch has been submitted.

The Canal and River Trust has submitted a £500k bid for a feasibility study in respect of a Water Management Strategy across the whole of the Canal on behalf of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal Regeneration Partnership. Although the application was unsuccessful, the Canal and River Trust (supported by MBACT) are meeting with Welsh Government to review the application.

Mr Dommatt was thanked for his update and the meeting closed at 5.29 p.m.