

BROADS SOCIETY

Minutes of the Main Committee held on Tuesday 9 July 2013 at the Hotel Wroxham, Wroxham

Present: Robin Godber (Chairman); Keith Bacon (Vice-Chairman),
Nick Ball, David Capp, Colin Dye, Peter Horsefield, Richard Reid,
Paul Savage, Mark Wells and Jill Wickens

By invitation for part of the meeting: Trudi Wakelin (BA), John Cressey,
Professor Richard Card and Peter Howe

In attendance: Carol Palfrey (Administrator)

Trudi Wakelin had been invited to the meeting to provide an update from the Broads Authority and this part of the business is recorded in a separate note. She was accompanied by John Cressy (Maffett Cruisers).

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Ian Masters

2 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

3 Minutes of the Meeting of 14 May

The minutes having been circulated, were agreed and signed as a true record.

4 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising

5 Broads Authority and Tolls Income

Richard Card had been invited to the meeting to bring the Committee up to date with a proposal by the Broads Authority to allocate tolls income to pay 30% of the salary of a Tourism Officer.

The Navigation Committee had supported this proposal. However, the NSBA, RYA, the British Marine Federation and other interested organisations had sought legal advice to support their view that the proposal was unlawful. They believed that using toll income for this purpose would be a clear contravention of the provisions of the Broads Acts which stated that income from tolls must be used solely for the maintenance and improvement of navigation. The Broads Authority had also sought legal advice to justify their proposal.

Richard explained that, if this allocation were to be approved, there was a real risk that it could set a precedent which could be used to justify further proposals to use toll income for purposes having only a

tenuous link to navigation. Action was therefore required now to protect the future of the navigation budget.

The issue was to be discussed at the Broads Authority meeting on Friday 12th July. A joint letter from the NSBA, RYA, Broads Hire Boat Federation and the British Marine Federation had been prepared for distribution to Authority members prior to that meeting.

The Chairman thanked Richard for his very helpful account of a complex legal situation.

After Richard's departure, the Committee discussed what action the Society might take. Although members shared the concerns which Richard had raised, it was agreed that there was little which could be done for the time being except to wait for the outcome of the meeting.

6 Finance

6.1 Financial Statement for the period to 30 June 2013

The Treasurer, Richard Reid, had circulated a summary showing income and expenditure and confirmed, that although the Society was solvent, an in-year deficit was still predicted. Expenditure was being tightly controlled and there were no areas where the Society was being profligate with its resources.

With assistance from the Administrator, Richard had drawn up a budget for 2013/14 based on the best possible estimates with accompanying notes to explain the basis of the calculations. He invited members for additional information which might improve the accuracy of the figures.

6.2 Recruitment Drive

Some years ago, members of the Committee had been asked to suggest the names of potential new members to whom the Chairman could send a personal letter inviting them to join the Society. This had resulted in several new members, although not all of them had renewed their subscriptions. It was agreed that it would be worth trying this approach again. The Administrator offered to find the original letter and send it to the Chairman for updating and editing.

6.3 Other Financial Matters

The Accounts were still with the Auditor.

7 CNP

Peter Howe hoped that the communications from CNP which he had continued to circulate to members were of interest.

He had circulated the notes from the meeting of 20 June but reported briefly on the issues discussed.

7.1 CNP Finances

CNP finances were now on an even keel and a break even position had been achieved in the last financial year.

- 7.2 Membership Fees
Revision of the formula by which Society membership fees were calculated would bring about a reduction in the Society's contribution from over £1000 to around £750 pa.
- 7.3 Manifesto for 2015 General Election
CNP were preparing a manifesto for the 2015 General Election which included a proposal for the creation of more National Parks.

Peter concluded his report by urging members to consider going to this year's National Park Societies Conference at Tenby – 15–17 November. He undertook to prepare a brief note for the October "Harnser" and a full report for the January edition.

8 Broads Charitable Trust

- 8.1 General Report
Peter Howe showed members the new leaflet publicising the "Love the Broads" Scheme and drew attention to the new website. A new booklet for businesses had also been produced which described the scheme in more detail. The scheme was progressing well and a progress report would shortly be posted on the new Love the Broads website. 25 businesses now had "badge boxes" for donations and 9 businesses had introduced voluntary additional charges.

Unfortunately, the first Project Officer had resigned for personal reasons and, although a new Officer was in post, funding was required to continue this essential post after September this year. The original appointment had been funded from BA's STEP budget.

Funding continued to be a challenge. Expenditure was currently greater than the money available for grants but £5k was available for the current financial year. Five applications for small sums would be considered at the Trust's July meeting.

- 8.2 Governance
Following Peter Horsefield's request a report on the governance arrangements had been prepared and was passed to him at the meeting. Keith Bacon and Peter Howe gave assurance that the Lady Mayhew bequest was being used strictly according to the Trust's constitution and the conditions laid down when the Society donated the money to the Trust.

9 Harnser

The Chairman reported that his letter in the latest issue of "Harnser" had been well received by the Vice-Presidents and, as a result, he had been invited to a meeting with them to discuss various aspects of the Society.

Jill reminded members that she required reports for the AGM booklet (Chairman, Chairs of North and South Rivers, Finance and Membership) by 31 August.

Members had been asked to comment on the latest issue of "Harnser" but, in view of Jill's announcement about her retirement, discussion was postponed. There was, however, agreement that an amusing item was always welcome (eg the letter about the disappearance of garden gnomes).

10 Anglia Afloat

The editor of Anglia Afloat had included the logo of the Museum of the Broads in the middle of the latest Society article which could imply, to the casual reader, that the column was compiled by the Museum. Richard Reid would point this out to the Editor. However, he was aware that the magazine liked to use photographs and he would in future include a photograph when submitting his editorial.

The August column would be a report of the Norfolk Show.

Although he enjoyed writing the column Richard was experiencing difficulty in identifying suitable topics and asked members to make suggestions. Broadsword and the Lady Mayhew Trophy were proposed.

11 Issues of Concern

It was agreed that the list of items previously identified would be retained on the agenda and updates provided at each meeting as appropriate.

11.1 Pylons - Lowestoft to Norwich - no further information

11.2 Solar Farm Development

Jill Wickens reported receipt of a letter from a member expressing concern that the Society had lodged an objection to this scheme for producing green energy. She had passed this to the Administrator who had responded in a letter giving a detailed explanation of the the background to the refusal. She had followed this up with a telephone conversation. Although the member was satisfied with this response, she nonetheless wished her comments to be made known to Committee members.

11.3 Pegasus Site Development

Now that planning approval had been given, the Society would keep a watching brief once construction work began.

11.4 Breydon Water - Ski-ing and management issues - see note on meeting Trudi Wakelin.

- 11.5 Water Quality – see notes on meeting with Trudi Wakelin on work proposed at Hickling.
The Chairman once again drew attention to Martin George’s success in persuading the Broads Authority that Hickling should be a priority.
- 11.6 River Chet – See note on report of meeting with Trudi Wakelin and John Cressey .
- 11.7 Climate Change Adaptation
There was no further information from the Broads Authority about the Climate Adaptation Plan. Keith Bacon said that the officer responsible for its development was Simon Hooton.
- 11.8 Norfolk Hub
John Wheeley, a member of the North Rivers Committee, had drawn attention to David Hastings’s letter in Harnser about the proposal for a Norfolk Hub and had enquired what action the Society was taking. The Chairman had contacted David Hastings for further information and asked whether the Society could do anything to help the campaign against this unwelcome development. David had advised that there was nothing the Society could do at the present time, other than to keep a watching brief on the situation.
- 11.9 Sotshole Broad
The owner of Sotshole Broad had agreed to submit a retrospective planning application. The Society, through the Northern Rivers Committee, would therefore have an opportunity to comment when the application was received.

12 Publicity and Promotion

- 12.1 Norfolk Show
Reporting on the Show, the Chairman said that there was no doubt that using a boat as the central feature of the display had been a good idea. The Show had provided a good opportunity to raise the Society’s profile and to generate interest in its activities. Robin had been interviewed on Radio Norfolk. He thanked all those who had helped.
- 12.2 General Promotion
The next event would be the Loddon Festival on Saturday 12 July.
- 12.3 Leaflets
The Administrator was concerned that depth of colour used in the current leaflets made legible completion of the application form impossible. The existing supply was almost exhausted. Nick Balls would insert a copy of the application form used on the website until new leaflets had been printed.

13 Lady Mayhew Trophy

The Administrator reported receipt of a nomination. Robin Godber, Jill Wickens and David Capp volunteered to serve on the Selection Panel. The Administrator would send them a copy of this nomination and any further nominations received before the closing date of 1 September. They should submit their recommendation to the September Committee meeting so that a decision could be made on whether there should be a financial award and, if so, the sum to be awarded.

14 Rivers Sub-Committees

14.1 Northern Rivers Sub-Committee (NRS-C)

The minutes of the meeting of 10 June had been circulated. Paul Savage had arranged a meeting with Adrian Clark about the mooring and access strategy.

A boat trip had been to give members of NRS-C to view developments and potential problems from the water. Robin Godber, who had been invited to take part, said that the trip, starting at Coltishall and extending as far as Salhouse Broad, had been a useful and informative exercise, enabling members to compare examples of good and bad design.

It was noted that problems with navigating north of Coltishall had been highlighted by members of public at the recent BA Public Meeting. It was agreed to ask one of the participants for a report to be included in "Harnser" together with photographs.

Keith Bacon had received an email from Jo Parmenter (copied to the Administrator) providing additional information about a planning application for additional moorings at Oby Dyke. NRS-C had lodged an objection. The Administrator would circulate to NRS-C members and canvass their views on whether the objection should be withdrawn in the light of the points made in Dr Parmenter's email.

The legal dispute over ownership of Cess Staithe at Martham was still to be resolved.

14.2 Southern Rivers Sub-Committee (SRS-C)

The minutes of the meeting of 12 June had been circulated. Colin Dye was pleased to report the addition of two new members: Mike Gross and John Cressey who had been at the meeting earlier.

He drew attention to the link with the River Wensum Parkway and the forthcoming boat trip through Norwich, the meeting to be arranged with Lesley Graham (Broadland Councillor) and the contact with Caroline Jarrold, Chair of Visit Norwich.

Encouraging visits to Norwich by water was part of the project to regenerate the Southern Broads and Norwich Yacht Station could play an important role in this strategy if it could shake off the poor reputation it had acquired. It was agreed that the Broads Authority's notices forbidding mooring had been along the river bank were unhelpful rather an encouragement to visitors to use the Yacht Station.

15 A.O.B

Broads Forum.

Robin Godber reported that Richard Card had been elected as the new Chairman.

16 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 10 September 2013

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 10.10 pm

Signed
Chairman

Date