

## **MINUTES OF THE MSCS COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON SUNDAY 22 JANUARY 2017 AT 5 OAKDENE GARDENS, MARPLE**

### 1. Members present

Robert Twigg (RT), Roger Bravey (RB), Liz Watson (LW), Margaret Burns (MB), Peter Scott (PS), Ian Moss (IM), Patrick Moss (PM). Apologies - Patrick O'Herlihy, Graham Burns, Peter Burns. RT took the minutes.

RB (Chair) welcomed members to the meeting and thanked IM for use of his house.

### 2. Minutes of the meetings held on 20.2.16, 18.7.16 and 25.7.16

All agreed as correct records. Matters arising:

20.2.16: Business Plan - RB said he now had the digital version of the maps and there was discussion on the use of these and how to share the information; it was noted that a contractor would need to do their own calculation of levels, but they are useful for us in planning a scheme. United Utilities (UU) - RB noted their response re Gorton Aqueduct. The IWA have agreed to a clear-up on 18.2.17 and WRG will do this as a project. Plaques – RT noted that GB has some but others have reportedly been installed, though RB said he hadn't seen one at the Hyde Road site as yet. PS suggested speaking to Steve Connolly about that.

18.7.16: RB noted the discussion with Cllr Butler, and that bank signatories have now been changed.

25.7.16: general support has been received for the scheme from Eddie Smith, but no money as yet. PS noted the attitude of UU and RB said he thought they wanted a scheme to save them having to maintain the reservoir. We need to get CRT interested in the scheme. It was noted that further discussion is needed on all this. On the MU project, RB noted that the engineering students don't seem involved anymore following David Sumner previously being in contact, but it did at least lead to contact with UU and some ideas. RB noted this is all preparation for any discussion with contractors. He also noted the discussion about cleaning Gorton Aqueduct.

LW asked for the AGM minutes to be circulated now so they can be checked. RT will do this.

### 3. Treasurer Report

RT noted the current balances: Current a/c £130.65 including a donation of £50.00 from Graham Burns; 100 Club a/c £311.85 after taking into account a £100.00 cheque to Mike Chase for a draw prize which has not yet been presented. The 2017 membership fee will remain at £2.00 but we should emphasised this is the minimum and we do need extra donations. RT will email/write to all members/supporters shortly asking for 2017 fees and donations. We need to say what people will get for this; mainly updates by email from RB. Agreed RB to provide RT with his list of contacts so we can try to get maximum membership. RB will consider another newsletter.

### 4. Secretary Report

PO not able to be present.

### 5. Chair Report

a). Gorton Station Aqueduct – RB noted that Network Rail just want to know what we might propose in future; British Waterways denied responsibility but MCC (via Maureen Barrett) have agreed to do some tidying-up and to allow trees to be removed by WRG on 18.2.17. RT noted that our insurance policy does cover MSCS volunteers for helping during clear-up work as long as not directly using power tools. RB said he would be available on that day to help take-away material. PS suggested informing local ward councillors. RB noted that some local people had made positive comments. PM asked how we communicate with the public on such issues and suggested a Facebook page for the group; we'd need an 'administrator' for this and it may not be a huge cost though we need to keep any expenses in mind; LW said her husband, Ian, may be interested in helping with this. RB noted that WRG are involved in the work project, and he was recently invited to a project they were doing in Hollingworth and they are a good organisation to keep involved with us.

b). Advance Works – RB suggested these need identifying now for either WRG or local people; not sure MCC will do a lot around the Aqueduct and there is a lot of rubbish around; we also need councillors and community organisers on board. PS said there are a couple of MCC wards involved and it would be useful to let the councillors know, and maybe also contact ex-councillor Neil Swannick as he had previously been very helpful. There is a three tier approach to projects – grassroots/councillors/high level. PS noted there is a community centre in Abbey Hey and there are also local schools we can contact. RB said he would come up

with a list of works at the Gorton end of the canal (not Reddish at this stage), and if they can be done it will help in the Reddish sections later.

c). Funding will of course be an issue but PM felt the Heritage Lottery may be worth contacting though we'll need a properly thought-out Business Plan if we do. PS noted the need for specialists to be involved in making such bids for funding. RB suggested walking the canal line again to see what's needed. Also, to clear trees and the like we'll need specialist operators for chipper equipment.

d). Channels with MCC – there are possible Neighbourhood Awards (similar to SMBC's Area Committee funds). RT asked if the Gtr Mcr Combined Authority is also something to think about and it was agreed we should contact the new Mayor when elected next May.

e). Local Community Support – RB suggested we concentrate on the local ward level initially as we need that to work first. There are "corridors of interest" between wards.

f). Setting up a Partnership – RB noted this may have to be a fairly loose agreement rather than formal. PS noted that the Combined Authority now has overall responsibility but there is a MCC "Waterways Strategy". Initially getting pride for the route via local people is important. PS suggested a display at Gorton Station, Abbey Hey School, Gorton Library, etc.

g). Strategy and Business Plan – more or less as discussed earlier.

h). Maps for the line of the canal – RB to follow up.

## 6. Any other business

a). Website information – LW said that it will be updated with RB's last newsletter and information on the Aqueduct clear-up. LW noted that the website domain name cost £80 but was for 2 years and there is another year to go. RB also noted the need to review the use of the current website at some point.

b). Aqueduct project - RT asked about ensuring any volunteers who turn up for this are covered by our insurance policy and RB clarified that WRG will give them induction training on-site and a list of names will be taken.

c). Lincolnshire and Wolverhampton Talks - PS gave details for anyone interested and RB said he would be attending at least one of these.

d). Leaflet update – RT noted that Graham Burns still has a box of several hundred leaflets which have PS contact details on. RB said he would look at updates for this; however we need to ensure that Patrick O'Herlihy is ok to have his contact details added. It was noted we may need a new version of the leaflet before long but we should use up what we have first, and this may need a sticky-label to cover the PS details. We can check what the cost of a new leaflet may be and consider if we need to raise some more funds for this. It was noted that the current leaflet has several sponsors on the back and perhaps we should ask them again.

e). Canal Society email address – PM suggested we get one set-up rather than using existing officer ones.

f). Sweatshirt – PS was wearing the one we had done some time ago and suggested this could be re-done and sold at events to raise some funds.

g). MSCS Council – RB asked if there should still be a 'Council' separate from the general membership group for meetings purposes. PM suggested it's useful to keep to a fairly small group in order to make decisions easily and quickly, though we may even need a smaller sub-group to discuss particular projects, and it's useful to keep to a group that will do things without continuing to discuss them.

h). Venues – RT said the Stockport Labour Club can be used for occasional meetings and MB suggested using other venues if we have speaker events.

i). Chair - RB noted he'll be away for a while and then will work on the levels for the canal line, the disposal of soil, and the lining to be used (noted the Montgomery Canal as an example). PS asked to keep involved in any strategy discussion about the canal.

## 7. Dates of future meetings

The next AGM was provisionally set for 22 October 2017, the venue to be decided. The date of the next Council meeting is to be left to the Chair to arrange. PM noted he is speaking in Manchester on 11 March re

the Somerset Coal Canal and thought it may be worth the MSCS putting together its own speaker presentation for use at events as part of future promotion.

The meeting closed at 4.30pm with thanks to our hosts.