

## **Broads Authority**

### **Navigation Committee**

Minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2010

#### **Present**

Mr D A Broad	Mr P Durrant	Dr P A Gurbutt.
Mr M C Broom	Mr P Frost	Mr A S Mallett
Sir Peter Dixon	Mr P Greasley	Mr P E Ollier

#### **In Attendance**

Mr S Birtles – Head of Waterways Strategy and Safety  
Mr A Clarke – Broads Projects Officer  
Ms M Conti – Broads Strategy Officer  
Mr M Dane - Navigation Works Supervisor  
Mr R G Holman – Director of Corporate Services  
Mr S W P Housden – Collector of Tolls  
Mr J Organ – Head of Administration and Executive Assistant  
Mr A Presslee – Planning Policy Officer  
Dr J Packman – Chief Executive  
Mr M Rimmer – Waterways Strategy Officer  
Mr R Rogers – Head of Construction and Facilities  
Mrs L Shute – Administrative Officer  
Mr A Vernon – Head Ranger (Navigation)  
Mrs T Wakelin – Director of Waterways

#### **Also Present**

Mr K Marsh – BESL  
Mr P Mitchelmore – Environment Agency

#### **1/1 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Ms M Farrar, Mrs A Haswell and Mr A Trafford.

#### **1/2 Appointment of Chairman**

The Chief Executive invited nominations for the position of Chairman for the forthcoming year.

It was proposed and duly seconded that Mr Broom be nominated.

There being no other nominations it was

RESOLVED

that Mr Broom be appointed as Chairman of the Navigation Committee for the forthcoming year.

Mr M C Broom (in the Chair)

The Chairman thanked members for their continued support.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Alan Presslee, Planning Policy Officer, to his first Navigation Committee meeting. and reminded members of the one day AINA Conference, 'The Future of Inland Waterways' which takes place on 15 November in London.

**1/3 Appointment of Vice-Chairman**

It was proposed and duly seconded that Mr Ollier be appointed as Vice Chairman for the forthcoming year.

There being no other nominations it was

RESOLVED

that Mr Ollier be appointed as Vice Chairman of the Navigation Committee for the forthcoming year.

**1/4 Items of Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

**1/5 Declarations of Interest**

Members expressed declarations of interest as set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

**1/6 Public Question Time**

No questions were raised by members of the public.

**1/7 Minutes of the Navigation Committee Meeting held on 2 September 2010**

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 September 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**(1) Minute 6/19 (1): Tolls in Adjacent Waters Survey**

It was noted that a contingency plan had been established to accelerate the timetable for completing the survey of adjacent waters and a report would be brought to the Committee in February 2011.

## **1/8 Summary of Progress/Actions/Response Taken following Discussions at Previous Meetings**

A report detailing progress with various items on which the Committee wished to be kept up to date was received.

### **(1) Swing Bridges**

The Waterways Strategy Officer gave an update on the operational status of the swing bridges and in particular the forthcoming closure to river traffic for work to be carried out at Somerleyton Bridge.

It was noted that officers were still in the process of trying to establish a written agreement for the future maintenance of the swing bridges with Network Rail.

Members expressed their concern and disappointment at the last minute change in the arrangements and the closure of all access under Somerleyton Bridge (apart from agreed opening slots in the morning, lunchtime and evening) which would have a severe impact on the hire boat industry, especially as the timing of the works coincided with half term week. Normal operations were planned to resume at 8.00pm on 5 November.

### **(2) South Walsham Slipway**

It was noted that the Authority was still in discussion with the Parish Council regarding proposals for the operation of South Walsham slipway. Members would be updated at the next meeting in December.

It was confirmed that the slipway was currently closed due to a health and safety issue with works to be carried out to backfill voids behind the piling.

## **1/9 Navigation Charges 2011/12**

Members received a report providing details of a suggested increase in the annual tolls and noted that the three year strategy for Navigation Income and Expenditure as agreed by the Authority last year was still robust. However this had been based on 6% increases in navigation charges over three years to offset the loss of the contribution from National Park Grant to dredging. An increase in hire boat income of £32,000 and efficiencies for the current year had meant that only a 5% increase for next year was now required to meet the agreed income target.

Members expressed concern that, as a result of the Spending Review and uncertainty of the level of National Park Grant (NPG), they did not have the draft income and expenditure figures on which to base their recommendation. Unfortunately it was not known when the Authority would be informed of the level of its NPG and members noted that the operational time frame meant that the Authority would need to make a decision on the level of tolls at its

meeting on 19 November. It was agreed that the situation was unsatisfactory although there was always some uncertainty as different factors could affect the level of tolls income.

In addition members noted that the relative cost between large and small private boats was becoming an issue and could be acting as a deterrent to small boat owners using the Broads. Members considered a proposal to hold down the increase for small boats to 2.5% with larger boat toll charges being increased to approximately 6% giving an overall increase in toll income of 5%. This would be until such time as a more fundamental consideration of the balance between large and small craft could be carried out alongside a review of the hire boat multiplier in the future.

Although some members were minded to delay the decision it was agreed by 7 votes to nil to recommend a toll increase of 5% and that this should be applied on a sliding scale of 2.5% for smaller boats up to approximately 6% for larger boats. Members again expressed regret that it had not been possible to provide a draft budget and hoped that this would not happen again.

#### RECOMMENDED

- (i) that a 5% toll increase be applied to all boats for 2011/12 scaled from 2.5% for smaller boats to approximately 6% for larger boats as set out in Appendix 2 to the minutes; and
- (ii) that no change be made to the hire boat multiplier pending a review and fundamental consideration of the balance of charges between large and small craft.

#### **1/10 Responding to the Spending Review**

Members received a report and presentation providing details of the expected results of the Government's Spending Review which had been announced on 20 October 2010. The advice from Defra had been that the Authority should plan for a 30% reduction in National Park Grant (NPG) which would mean a total reduction in Grant of £1.48 million over four years including the 5% in-year cut. This could not be achieved without major changes to the way the Authority was organised and operated and the number of staff it employed and could not be accommodated by natural wastage or voluntary redundancy/early retirement alone.

A reduction in income of such magnitude had meant that the Authority was examining all its activities and the extent to which they were best suited to the future delivery of its statutory duties. Members noted a set of guidelines for the future allocation of expenditure which had been adopted by the Authority together with basic principles for the future delivery of services.

A series of service reviews had been completed and were being considered by the Resource Allocation Working Group along with optimum ways of delivering the Authority's purposes with reduced resources. This was so that

the Authority could continue to deliver an integrated approach to the management of the Broads. The Group had also looked at ways of generating additional income. The Authority would be considering its response to the anticipated reductions in NPG on 19 November 2010.

Members were assured that provision had been made for match funding the STEP project and that there were sufficient funds for the PRISMA project should it proceed.

Members were unanimous that the Navigation Committee should be consulted on proposals that had a significant effect on the use or enjoyment of the navigation area. Members were assured that this would happen.

#### **1/11 Broads Plan Review: Update**

Members received an update on the progress on the draft Broads Plan 2011 which had been published for public consultation from 7 June 2010 to 13 August 2010. Copies of all the representations received had been published on the Authority's website. These would help to inform the next stages of the review.

It was noted that the timetable for the review of the Plan had been amended to take into account the timing of the Government Spending Review and decisions on National Park Grant and allow the Authority to undertake further work through consultation to develop and firm up robust priorities for the next Plan period (5 – 7 years). It was now intended to take a revised plan to the Authority in the New Year, rather than in November 2010.

Members' comments on the response to the first draft Broads Plan and on priorities for the next Plan period were invited. Members would be informed of progress at the next meeting on 9 December and would also be invited to a special workshop, likely to be held in late November/early December, to consider the revised Plan and priorities.

#### **1/12 Broads Local Development Framework Development Management Policies Development Plan Document: Proposed Submission Document**

A report providing an update on the preparation of the Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) and the results of the most recent stage of consultation were received. Members noted the responses and proposed changes and consultation responses relevant to navigation interests.

The recent consultation had concluded on 16 July 2010 and attracted 259 representations. Members noted that analysis and assessment of representations were ongoing and navigation-related issues had been prioritised in order for their consideration. A comprehensive report on all responses received, together with appropriate recommendations, would be reported to the Planning Committee on 5 November and to the Authority on 19 November 2010.

Members commented on landscape issues and that the planting of trees could produce adverse conditions for sailing and should be discouraged where it inhibited sailing. Historically in the Broads, the landscape had contained fewer trees at the water's edge. It was requested that Policy DP2 be reviewed to account for this.

A member also pointed out the risk of a proliferation of illuminated signs in the Broads and their impact on navigation and requested that Policy DP10 be reviewed in this context.

## **1/13 Broadland Flood Alleviation Project**

### **(1) General Update**

Members received a report providing an update on the Broadland Flood Alleviation Project, including the works scheduled and works at the design, pre-application stage and construction phase.

#### **(i) Navigation Hazards Presented by Old Piling**

Members noted that Broadland Environment Services Ltd (BESL) was working on a schedule to provide removal dates for piling for which it had accepted responsibility.

Members considered what form of more permanent method of hazard marking should be used for dangerous piling awaiting removal and agreed with the proposal that the present fragile posts should be replaced with more substantial yellow posts. The height should be determined on a site specific basis so the posts were clearly visible as this would depend on the height of local vegetation. A balance needed to be struck where posts were a hazard to sailing. Members were assured that the posts would be removed once the area they were marking was visible and stable.

### **(2) Planning Application for Compartments 33 and 34 (Fritton and Belton Marshes)**

A report was received which provided members with a summary of BESL's planning application for Compartments 33 and 34 (Fritton and Belton Marshes).

Members welcomed the flood defence improvements that would be provided for Fritton and Belton Marshes, the design of the scheme in relation to the protection of the important reptile population in the compartments, the repiling of the Authority's 24-hour mooring at St Olaves and that there was an opportunity to develop additional permissive access in the compartments.

However, the issue of the future of mooring provision at Burgh Castle remained a serious concern. The moorings were important for a

number of reasons, including navigation safety. This was the last mooring opportunity before Breydon Water and was essential for boaters waiting for the tide and seeking a refuge in inclement weather. Members welcomed the proposal to retain the piling, and carry out maintenance works for the duration of the contract. However they agreed that there should be a formal agreement between the Environment Agency and the Authority regarding the ongoing maintenance and mooring provision at Burgh Castle once the contract had expired. This would be consistent with the memorandum of understanding between the EA and the Broads Authority and BESL's Strategic Environmental Assessment. Officers will therefore be meeting with BESL to discuss this issue prior to the application being considered by the Planning Committee.

Members supported officers' comments that appropriate conditions regarding the specification of piling, timing of works and reinstatement required should be placed on any planning permission.

### **(3) Erosion Monitoring at Piling Removal Sites**

A report providing members with a summary of the erosion monitoring data BESL had provided for the piling removal sites in the project area was received. Members noted details of a proposal put forward by BESL for a revision of the methodology used to assess erosion rates in piling removal areas which was a condition of the planning consent.

It was noted that erosion rates currently appear to be within the agreed intervention criteria and vegetation establishment and bank stability in most of the piling removal areas was excellent. In the reaches where piling was removed on the Waveney, Chet and Ant, reed growth was so good that it was now possible to remove some of the channel markers. However members were still very concerned about the level of erosion in the lower Yare.

It would be beneficial to bring all the erosion monitoring in line with the same timetable and members supported officers' recommendations that BESL's proposed new method of calculating erosion rates and allowing the current planning conditions for the various planning permissions that have been granted by the Authority for piling removal be modified. The frequency and methodology would then be conditioned on future planning permissions for piling removal. In addition the proposal that Didson sonar surveying be added to the schedule immediately upon removal of piling, to demonstrate that no hazards remain on the river bed after piling removal had taken place, was supported.

### **1/14 Dockyard Work Programme: Update 2010/11**

The Head of Construction and Facilities introduced a report giving details of the delivery of the Dockyard work programme for the current financial year and its progress so far.

Members noted that a detailed dredging programme for 2011/12 would be brought to the next meeting for consideration.

#### **1/15 Boating Safety Management Group: Update**

The Chairman of the Boating Safety Management Group (BSMG) reported on the work carried out by the Group since the last meeting, primarily the Port Marine Safety Code Hazard Review.

Members noted that, following concentration of efforts on the risk of drowning when embarking and disembarking, the hazard had been re-classified from a category 'A' to a category 'B' which has enabled the hazard to be declared "ALARP" (As Low as Reasonably Possible). A report of the full findings of the review would be brought to a future meeting.

#### **1/16 Navigation Works Programme 2010/11**

The Navigation Works Supervisor introduced a report giving details of the Work Programme for 2010/11 and recording progress to date.

The Work Programme for 2011/12 was in the process of being prepared and would be reported to a future meeting.

#### **1/17 Navigation Income and Expenditure; 1 April 2010 to 31 August 2010**

Members received a report summarising actual income and expenditure for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 August 2010, compared to the revised budget.

#### **1/18 Chief Executive's Report**

A report summarising the current position in respect of a number of important projects and events was received.

##### **(1) Navigation Patrolling and Performance Targets**

Members commented on the problem of speeding and noted details of two recent successful prosecutions. These needed to be publicised to act as a deterrent.

#### **1/19 Current Issues**

There were no items under current issues.

#### **1/20 Date of Next Meeting and Future Events**

The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Thursday 9 December 2010 at Dragonfly House, Gilders Way, Norwich, commencing at 2.00pm.

The meeting concluded at 4.45pm.

CHAIRMAN

## Code Of Conduct For Members

## Declaration of Interests

Committee Navigation Committee  
Date 21 October 2010

Name Please Print	Agenda/ Mins No(s)	Nature of Interest (Please describe the nature of the interest)	Please tick here if the interest is a Prejudicial interest ✓
A S Mallett	1/7 1/13(ii) 1/18	As before Member BA Planning Committee Member Norwich Frostbite Sailing Club New Cut will withdraw if necessary	✓
P E Ollier	1/9 – 1/18	Member NSBA Committee, various sailing clubs, Toll payer	
P Dixon	1/9, 1/10, 1/11, 1/13, 1/14, 1/16, 1/17	Toll payer, Hickling resident	
D A Broad	1/9 – 1/19	Toll payer Member Great Yarmouth Port Consultative Committee	
P Greasley	1/9 – 1/19	Toll payer BHBF Chairman	
P Gurbutt	1/9 – 1/19	Toll payer, Member of British Rowing Club, Lowestoft Rowing Club	
M C Broom	1/, 1/10, 1/11, 1/12 1/16	NFSC, NSBA, toll payer	

APPENDIX 2

Proposed increases in navigation charges for 2011/12

Example Tolls - Private:	Flat 5% Increase			Option with 2.5% increase for smaller boats		
	2010/11 Toll	2011/12 Toll	Increase	2011/12 Toll	Increase	% Increase
Canoe	£27.40	£28.77	£1.37	£28.08	£0.68	2.5%
Motor 5m <sup>2</sup>	£92.43	£97.05	£4.62	£94.74	£2.31	
Sail 5m <sup>2</sup>	£46.22	£48.53	£2.31	£47.37	£1.15	
Motor 11m <sup>2</sup>	£135.51	£142.29	£6.78	£140.82	£5.31	3.9-4.7%
Sail 11m <sup>2</sup>	£67.76	£71.15	£3.39	£70.41	£2.65	
Motor Sail 18m2	£138.43	£145.35	£6.92	£144.94	£6.51	
Motor 25m <sup>2</sup>	£236.03	£247.83	£11.80	£248.34	£12.31	5.2-5.9%
Motor Sail 25m2	£175.81	£184.60	£8.79	£184.91	£9.10	
Motor 38m <sup>2</sup>	£329.37	£345.84	£16.47	£348.18	£18.81	
Motor 48m <sup>2</sup>	£401.17	£421.23	£20.06	£424.98	£23.81	
Example Tolls - Hire:						
Motor 11m <sup>2</sup>	£406.53	£426.86	£20.33	£422.46	£15.93	3.9-5.9%
Motor 25m <sup>2</sup>	£637.28	£669.14	£31.86	£670.52	£33.24	
Motor 38m <sup>2</sup>	£889.3	£933.77	£44.47	£940.09	£50.79	
Motor 48m <sup>2</sup>	£1083.16	£1137.32	£54.16	£1147.45	£64.29	