

Appointment to the Navigation Committee
Report by Solicitor and Monitoring Officer

Summary:	The recruitment process for the single vacancy on the Navigation Committee has been completed. The Broads Authority is asked to appoint the recommended candidate to the Navigation Committee.
Recommendation:	Mr Simon Sparrow is appointed to the Navigation Committee for the balance of the 4-year term created by the vacancy until May 2019.

1 Background

- 1.1 A single vacancy arose on the Navigation Committee during 2016 through the appointment by the Secretary of State to the Broads Authority of one of its co-opted members. The vacancy is under section 9(5)(d) of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988, representing categories of toll payers as defined by that section.
- 1.2 The recruitment process was commenced by an advertisement in the Eastern Daily Press in November 2016 with a closing date of 30 December 2016. Simultaneously letters were sent to all the Category D consultee organisations, informing them of the process.
- 1.3 There were 14 applications for the vacancy and on 1 February 2017 a panel met to shortlist the applicants. The panel was chaired by Christine Lee, Barrister, one of the Broads Authority's two Independent Persons. Other panel members were Professor Jacquelin Burgess, the Chair of the Authority, Professor Richard Card, a representative of NSBA and Mr Howard Pridding the Chief Executive of British Marine. Four candidates were selected for interview by the panel.
- 1.5 The applicants were all assessed on the basis of the following criteria, which are set out in the Role specification and unchanged from the 2015 appointment exercise:
 - Good knowledge of the Broads and its special qualities
 - Good knowledge of the navigation area and current relevant issues
 - Good knowledge of the varied recreational uses of the Broads
 - Good knowledge of the boating industry and the current issues the companies face

- Knowledge of an organisation/governance and ability to think independently and form a balanced view.

The additional criteria of being able to see both sides of an argument and take a balanced view and having excellent communication and interpersonal skills were felt by the panel to be best assessed through an interview of the shortlisted candidates.

- 1.4 Following the review of the appointments process approved by the Broads Authority on 30 September 2016, the Category D consultee organisations who had expressed a wish to receive them, were sent details of the shortlisted candidates. The Navigation Committee was consulted over the shortlisted candidates at its meeting on 23 February 2017.
- 1.4 The panel interviewed the four candidates on 1 March 2017. The panel were provided with representations from five consultee bodies and comments made by members of the Navigation Committee. The panel gave every candidate equal opportunity to demonstrate their qualities and ability and discussed each candidate and measured them against the criteria for the role. The panel selected Mr Simon Sparrow after considered discussions, based on the consensus view of the whole panel.

2. The selected candidate

- 2.1 Mr Sparrow resides in Beccles, Suffolk. He runs a boatyard in Beccles which he purchased in 2014 and which he considers he has run successfully. Mr Sparrow is a director and member of the Barge Association and has restored his own barge over 10 years, in which he resides. Although Mr Sparrow considers himself a relative newcomer to the area, he has settled quickly and believes he has established a good understanding of the attributes and challenges of boating on the Broads, especially the Southern Rivers. Mr Sparrow's application pointed to his knowledge of and ability to articulate the needs of larger vessels. Mr Sparrow has been involved in the waterside aspects of the last two Beccles Charter Weekends, hosting the 2016 event. He pointed to the importance of attracting a new generation of river users through such events. Mr Sparrow has a background in IT and has been responsible for running consultancy teams in this sector, which included facilitating international meetings, overcoming language barriers and dealing with individuals from different cultures. Mr Sparrow is a toll payer.
- 2.2. The panel considered that Mr Sparrow had an impressive knowledge and understanding of the challenges, present and future in managing the navigation area. He gave an excellent thought-provoking presentation and demonstrated fresh vision and insight which could make a major contribution to the thinking of the navigation committee. Mr Sparrow runs a yard operating a small fleet of day boats, moorings and houseboats. In addition through cruising and living in a large barge he is a private recreational boater. The panel considers that his appointment would add to the range of experience of the Navigation Committee.

3 Conclusion and Recommendation

- 3.1 The Broads Authority is asked to accept the recommendation of the interview panel and to appoint Mr Simon Sparrow to the Navigation Committee for the remaining balance of the four-year term created by the current vacancy.

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