



# CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

*Navigation authority for the River Cam, between Cambridge and Bottisham Lock*

## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CONSERVATORS HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, CAMBRIDGE, ON THURSDAY 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 10.00AM.

**Present: Conservators:** Councillor Anna Bradnam, Mr Giles Greenfield, Mr Alistair Storer, Mr Tim Wotherspoon, Cllr Katie Thornburrow, Mr Richard Turnill, Dr May Block, Mr Simon Judge, Mr Paul Separovic, Cllr Richard Swift

**Absent:** Mr Steven Morris

**Officers:** Mrs Helen Cleary (CEO), Mr David Partridge (River Patrol Officer- RPO), Mrs Gillian Elwood (Clerk)

**Observers:** Father David Goode, Ms Clara Todd, Dr Christine Heath, Mr Roland Beevor, Mr Peter Watson

**Members of the public:** Mr John Martin, Mr Rod Ingersent

### 1. Welcome and apologies received.

Mrs Elwood took the Chair, welcomed everyone, and carried out housekeeping matters.

Apologies were received from Cllr D Levien, Mr J Macnaghten, Mr W Key, Mr J Leighton and Miss C Hurst.

### 2. **Appointments**

#### 2.1 **Welcome to New Conservators**

Mrs Elwood welcomed the re-appointed and new Conservators.

Cllr A Bradnam (County Council)

Mr P Separovic (Environment Agency)

Mr S Judge (Environment Agency)

#### 2.2 **Election and Appointment of Chair (statutory role)**

Mrs Elwood confirmed that Miss C Hurst wished to be nominated for the role of Chair, but was unwell, and absent from the meeting. Cllr Bradnam nominated Miss Hurst, which was seconded by Dr M Block. There were no further nominations.

**The Conservators voted unanimously to elect Ms Kate Hurst as Chair for 2023, *nem. con.***

#### 2.3 **Election and Appointment of Deputy Chair (non-statutory role)**

In the absence of the new Chair, Mrs Elwood invited nominations for the post of Deputy Chair. Dr Block proposed Cllr Bradnam, and this was seconded by Cllr K Thornburrow. There were no further nominations.



# CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

*Navigation authority for the River Cam, between Cambridge and Bottisham Lock*

The Conservators voted unanimously to elect Cllr Anna Bradnam as Deputy Chair for 2023, *nem. con.*

Councillor Bradnam took the Chair, and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## 2.4 Farewell to Conservators

The Deputy Chair thanked Mr C Brown for his many valuable years of service and assistance to the Conservancy. Gifts were presented on behalf of the Conservancy to show their appreciation. Mr Brown extended his thanks to everyone for the gifts and good wishes.

## 2.5 Appointment to Committees

The Deputy Chair stated there were two Committees requiring volunteers to participate; the General Purposes Committee (GPC), consisting of four Conservators and the Chair, and the Regulatory Committee (Reg Com), consisting of four Conservators and a non-voting role for three Observers.

The Deputy Chair first invited Conservators to volunteer for the GPC by a show of hands. Those volunteering at this point were Cllr Bradnam and Mr Judge, together with Miss Hurst as Chair. It was felt that Mr Greenfield might wish to continue and would be asked when possible. Mrs Elwood asked to address the meeting, to give further details of what each committee did. Mrs Cleary further clarified the role of the Regulatory Committee as dealing with matters of regulations and statutes, and the General Purposes Committee with matters of finance and business and staffing. Mrs Cleary stated that the aim is for four meetings per year, but the GPC may need more. The Deputy Chair stated she was happy to discuss committee membership with individuals during the break. She also asked whether Conservators would be happy to have their email addresses shared within the Conservancy. Anyone who would rather not was asked to contact the Clerk. Miss Todd (Observer) asked whether she was considered to be a Conservator with regards to emails. The Clerk confirmed that Observers were blind copied when sent the papers for meetings of other correspondence. She explained the structure of the Conservators and that the Observers are invited interested parties who are valued for their input and opinions as representatives of the wider river community. It is a non-statutory, non-voting role.

The Deputy Chair and Clerk confirmed that Cllr Swift, Cllr Thornburrow and Dr Block would be on the Regulatory Committee, and Mr Greenfield to confirm if he would continue.

## 2.6 Appointment of Observers

Observers had been selected prior to the meeting and invited to attend. Three volunteers were requested to be part of the Regulatory Committee. They were confirmed as Dr C Heath, Father D Goode, and Mr R Beevor.

## 2.7 Consultancy Contract

The Deputy Chair confirmed Mr Clive Brown had been extremely helpful in drawing up the Five Year Business Plan, and the Pension Cessation project, and that he had agreed to work with the Conservancy to see the matters through. It had been agreed by the GPC that this be dealt with as a consultancy Contract, and the Deputy Chair asked that the Full Body of Conservators ratify



# CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

*Navigation authority for the River Cam, between Cambridge and Bottisham Lock*

the Decision. The Deputy Chair reminded the Conservators that their range of expertise and knowledge was a welcome asset to the Conservancy, but to remember that when acting or making decisions for the Conservancy it is as a Conservator, in the best interest of the navigation, not as an extension of the body represented.

**The Conservators voted unanimously to agree to the Consultancy Contract for Mr Brown.**

### 3. Delegation of Powers

#### 3.1 Consideration and Adoption of Delegation of Powers.

Prior to consideration the Deputy Chair asked everyone around the table to introduce themselves. Conservators were then asked to appointed the selected Observers en bloc, after they too introduced themselves.

(Mr Greenfield joined the meeting- he confirmed to the Deputy Chair that he was happy to continue on both committees)

The Deputy Chair stated that having read the document Conservators would be aware that it gave delegated authority to officers and the Chair to carry out decisions on behalf of the Conservators in the event of emergencies occurring between meetings, to be ratified at a future Full Body Meeting. It was noted that an amendment be made to the document, changing a date from 2023 to 2024. Mrs Cleary confirmed the document enabled officers to carry out their day to day work efficiently. Conservators were asked to agree to the Delegation of Powers.

**The Conservators voted unanimously to agree to appoint the selected Observers en bloc for the year.**

**The Conservators voted unanimously that the Delegation of Powers to the Chair, Deputy Chair and Officers be adopted to 2024, subject to amended date on document.**

#### 3.2 Consideration and Adoption of Terms of Reference(TOR) for Committees.

The Deputy Chair stated that having read the document Conservators would be aware that the Terms permit the committees to appoint their own Chair, where pertinent, and for committee meetings to be convened and for matters to be voted on when the meetings are quorate, the chair having a casting vote. Where urgent decisions are required an exchange of emails is permitted. The Deputy chair invited comment or questions. None were received. Conservators were asked to adopt the TOR for the year 2023/24.

**The Conservators voted unanimously to agree that the Terms of Reference for Committees be adopted.**

### 4. Minutes of the Full Body Meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

The minutes were agreed subject to amendments to the names of Mr Key and Mr Ingersent, and two other minor amendments.



# CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

*Navigation authority for the River Cam, between Cambridge and Bottisham Lock*

The Conservators voted unanimously to agree to adopt the minutes of 27<sup>th</sup> October 2022, subject to the changes stated.

## 5. Matters Arising (not otherwise on the Agenda)

The Deputy Chair asked the meeting to ensure that if anyone wished to raise a matter for consideration, to do so prior to the meeting so it could be added to the agenda.

5.1 Other Cities with Towpaths- the Deputy Chair asked for an update on whether this had been looked at. The Clerk confirmed that there had not been time to do so since the last meeting.

5.2 Meeting With Cam Valley Forum- the RPO confirmed he had been invited to attend meetings with the CVF.

5.3 Walls of lock at Jesus Green, letter to be sent- Cllr Thornburrow confirmed Miss Hurst had sent a letter from the Chair.

Cllr Thornburrow referred to the RPO meeting with groups re making connections to assist boat dwellers and river users. She asked whether this had been done in view of the cost of living crisis. Mrs Cleary confirmed that when the RPO is made aware of difficulties re licensing costs, those affected are introduced to agencies who may be able to help. There is no way to assess anyone's financial status, this is not within the Officers' remit, but there is information that can be passed on.

5.4 City Council Moorings- Councillor Thornburrow referred to on-going issues with the pump out over the winter period, a hazard to the boat community and the quality of the water. She requested that where issues arise the Conservancy continues to notify and question the City Council on the matters, via Finance and Resources.

Mr Wotherspoon referred back to point 5.1 and stated that such a project would perhaps be better served by a towpath working group, due to the size of the research required, and pressure on Officer time. The Deputy Chair referred to a more specific aspect namely the riparian owners responsibilities and the towpath. She suggested the idea of a working group be discussed at a meeting where the Chair is present. Mr Wotherspoon also declared an interest in an item on the agenda, namely Conservators House Application. The Deputy Chair made the point to the Conservators that if at any time they felt a conflict of interests they too should declare it.

## 6. Regulatory Committee Report and Recommendations

### 6.1 Regulatory Committee Report

6.1.1 2023/24 Registration Matters- Mr Greenfield referred to the report received by Conservators and Observers that gives an idea of the work carried on by the Regulatory Committee. In the last quarter of the year it makes recommendations to the GPC on matters of vessel categories and licence fees for the upcoming registration year, to be embedded in the budget and licensing for that year. There was a minor change to a categorisation of auxiliary engines used on unpowered boats, ratifying a working arrangement



## CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

*Navigation authority for the River Cam, between Cambridge and Bottisham Lock*

and concession from the previous year, affecting around half a dozen boats on the river.

6.1.2 2023/24 Conditions of Registration- Mr Greenland stated these are updated annually, and that the changes for this year were minor, and unanimously agreed at Reg Comm.

6.1.3 2023/24 Anglian Pass Fees- Mr Greenfield stated that the Pass was considered by the Reg Comm at the same time as the Conservancy fees were being considered, and useful comparisons were made. An agreement between the Conservancy and its partner groups, the Environment Agency and the Middle Level Commissioners, required approval for an increase for the coming year of CPI plus 2%. Both partners had already agreed to the figure, and the Reg Comm voted to agree. Mrs Cleary clarified that the Anglian Pass Agreement stated that increases in fees will be CPI plus 2% per annum. This did not happen in the current year but it is proposed that it continue in future years per the Agreement. Mr Brown stated that CPI+2% is the agreed figure unless the parties agree otherwise.

6.1.4 Block Licenses- Mr Greenfield stated there are a number of Block Licenses, Issued to a variety of river users. Licenses for the sailing Club and British Canoeing did not require further consideration for the year 2023/24, but those for Cambridge Canoe Club (CCC) and Cambridge University Canoe Club (CCUC) did. The terms and conditions of their licenses were out of sync with those of other river users. It was made clear to both clubs that the terms and conditions of the Block Licence would therefore be reviewed for 2023/24 to ensure they were in line with everyone else. Mr Greenfield explained that the canoe clubs had had a unique arrangement whereby cost reductions were given, depending on the frequency of use of a vessel, unlike other groups who were charged the full amount per boat, per annum. Both clubs had been sent their new licenses for review. Mrs Elwood confirmed this was the case. CUCC have asked for the matter to be reviewed but have been reminded they were advised that the terms were only for 2022/23. In the case of CCC, their Chair has claimed they had no knowledge of the changes. However, Mrs Elwood has advised them of both written advice, emails and that two Cambridge Canoe Club committee members are, or have been, Conservators, in attendance at the meetings where the proposals were discussed, recommended and approved. Mr Brown confirmed the clubs had been notified in early 2022 of the changes and had therefore had a considerable time to consider and comment. Cllr Bradnam asked Mr Greenfield whether he wanted a final meeting with the clubs on the matter. He stated that as a matter of transparency changes should be done in consultation with the clubs. Cllr Bradnam asked the Clerk to note this as an action point.



## CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

*Navigation authority for the River Cam, between Cambridge and Bottisham Lock*

6.2

### Regulatory Committee Recommendation for Decision by Conservators

- 6.2.1 Anglian Pass Fees- Conservators voted unanimously to approve the fees at CPI+ 2% in line with partner agencies, for the year 2023/24.
- 6.2.1 Conditions of Registration- Conservators voted unanimously to approve the use of the Conditions of Registration 2022/23 for the period 2023/24 (as amended)
- 6.3.2 Changes in Registration categories and fees relating thereto- Conservators voted unanimously to approve the category recommended by the Regulatory Committee for auxiliary engines (CAT61) with a fee of £25 and the removal of CAT25.

The meeting returned to Mr Greenfield at this point to discuss the Events Policy.

- 6.1.5 Events Policy, Guidance Notes and 2023/24 Fee Schedule- Mr Greenfield referred to the notes which show the depth of research and work that has gone into the policy and events in general, revising how events are managed on the river. There is an events policy which has now been reviewed. He asked Mrs Cleary to explain further. She stated that officers had been asked to review in the light of costs, impact to the towpath other impacts and costs to the Conservancy. Historically there has been change from predominantly rowing events to more variety, e.g., cardboard boat and rubber duck races, displays, pageants. There are now a variety of classes of event to be considered. Officers were asked to make a considered proposal re the footprint of an event, the effect it has on the river and towpath and on other river users. There are also river user groups who previously had not been considered in regard to events e.g., sailing club with small dinghy races and the canoe clubs. A wider view of racing and non-racing events was considered, to make matters more equitable amongst users, and after discussion at Regulatory Committee, a proposal was considered whereby the basic rowing fee schedule is the basis for an event fee schedule. There are events that have negligible impact on the river and its users which would attract a zero fee under the proposal. Assessment will be made by the River Patrol Officer. All events are considered as to whether they are negligible, minor, moderate, major, and to make a comparative charge. Conservators were asked to note that previously no charge had been made for the use of the towpath, as now proposed, where the footprint of an event impacts the towpath. e.g., large crowds of spectators. This would be a daily fee of £30. There would also be a charge of £10 per day for non-emergency vehicles which access the towpath. Another consideration was the charge for vessels attending only for the purpose of an event, not otherwise licenced for the Cam. There is no statutory provision for visiting vessels, but has been concessionary for racing events,



## CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

*Navigation authority for the River Cam, between Cambridge and Bottisham Lock*

with local groups such as the CRA and CUBC making a one off payment. This however was not enforceable. It is proposed that fees are paid on an event by event basis, based on the number of visiting vessels. Mr Judge stated that he was in favour of the policy; it would not raise huge revenue but did set out useful and set procedures to follow and that the responsibility of events was not down to the Conservancy or Officers. Cllr Bradnam concurred.

- 6.3.3 **Events Policy, Guidance Notes and 2023/24 Fee Schedule-** The Conservators voted unanimously to approve the adoption of the Events Policy, guidance and fees notes as recommended by the Regulatory Committee, to be reviewed after six and twelve months.

### 7. General Purposes Report and Recommendations

#### 7.1 General Purposes Committee Report

In the absence of Miss Hurst as Chair of the General Purposes Committee, Cllr Bradnam asked Mrs Cleary to present the reports.

- 7.1.1 **2021/22 Audit- Year End Accounts-** Mrs Cleary stated a significant amount of work had been carried out by Officers and auditors for the annual audit, which is carried out in accordance with national standards. Auditor staffing issues delayed the process, as the report would normally be presented to Conservators earlier in the financial year. Changes to funds on the accounts were made to give clarity to Conservators as to where funds lie. The General Purposes Committee (GPC) are delegated responsibility to go through the accounts. They have also met with the auditors, the Conservators separately to Officers. Cllr Bradnam confirmed this had been the case and despite delays on both sides she was happy with the audit results. Mrs Cleary confirmed there are elements of the audit raised in the Business Plan. Mr Brown stated that Conservators are being asked to approve the accounts and authorise the Chair to sign them off and that the recommendation be changed to reflect this.

**The Conservators voted unanimously to approve the Year End Accounts for 2021/22, and authorised the Chair to sign them off, and to sign the Letter of Recommendation.**

- 7.1.2 **2023/24 Vessel Licence Fees-** Mrs Cleary stated that Conservators had previously been asked to consider various scenarios with regards to their finances and proposed income streams. It is an intention that the reliance on licence fee income be reduced by alternative revenue sources, as set out in the Business Plan. Currently the Conservancy is reliant on licence fee income. Officers were asked to put fee proposals together for 2023/24, in the light of previous forecasts and to be consistent. It was agreed that a figure of CPI+



## CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

*Navigation authority for the River Cam, between Cambridge and Bottisham Lock*

2.5% be used. In the current economic climate, the CPI rate is unprecedented. The matter was considered initially by the Reg Comm as part of their remit, but the committee decision was split, with a proposal of CPI only, being 10.7%, or CPI +2.5%. The matter was referred to the GPC to consider in line with other financial considerations. The vote decided that the latter be recommended to the Full Body of Conservators, being 13.2%. It is the proposed increase for all vessel groups. Mrs Cleary reminded the meeting that the Conservancy receives no government funding or subsidy, nor from any other relevant authorities or agencies. Expenditure is covered by the fee amount raised. Cllr Thornburrow stated that as a boat owner she did not feel conflicted on the matter, her concerns were for low income boat dwellers receiving support. Mrs Cleary confirmed that many people in this category had their licence and mooring paid from benefits received and that officers engaged with the Housing Benefits office on the matter. Increases in Licence fees should be covered.

**The Conservators voted unanimously to approve the recommendations of the General Purposes Committee to increase the annual Licence fees for all categories of vessel by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) of 10.7% plus 2.5% in 2023/24.**

- 7.1.3 2023/24 Budget Proposals- Mrs Cleary stated that the GPC had seen the Proposals for the increases and that in some sectors costs had increased far above CPI in ways that affect the Conservancy, e.g., cost of steel and wood, mechanics, that represent increases of up to 30%. The Officers work to a very tight budget, with work having to be postponed when necessary. The proposed expenditure budget is based on known factors for the coming year and given in good faith. Income cannot be guaranteed, what is shown in the budget is anticipated. There is a need to cover more than operational expenditure each year, as indicated by increasing costs for the repairs of asset vessels over the years, and replacement, even with second-hand. Mrs Cleary asked for two items of capital project to be considered for now, being materials for the annual revetment work and the usual amount for the maintenance and replacement of work machinery. As markets stand, quotes for work and materials can change rapidly in a short space of time. Further capital work and expenditure will depend on what is decided in the Business Plan. Mr Brown addressed the meeting to update the Conservators on the situation with the shortfall on the pensions funds, due to the restructuring of staff, owed to the Local Government pension Fund. Provision has been made in the budget to repay a lump sum and the balance over a ten year period. The proposal is currently awaiting approval at a meeting to be held in March. Cllr Bradnam expressed her thanks to Mrs Cleary for the work done in a difficult economic period, and to Mr Brown for his work on the pension fund. Mr Watson (Observer) asked whether in regards to the increase in vessel fees whether thought had been given to the number of vessels permitted to





## CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

*Navigation authority for the River Cam, between Cambridge and Bottisham Lock*

register. Mrs Cleary said an estimated loss of 5% of boats had been made, but that boats might not leave the river, they just might not be registered. The role of the RPO is to engage throughout the year to prevent this. Cllr Swift asked whether if inflation halved during the year whether fees would adjust accordingly. Mrs Cleary clarified that fees are set for the whole year and proposed that the discussions are brought to the October meeting of the Full Body to decide. Cllr Thornburrow stated that had the Conservators not voted for the agreed increase, they would have been working on a negative increase basis due to inflation.

**The Conservators voted unanimously to approve the Budget proposals for 2023/24, namely the proposed operational expenditure budget, an increase of all non-registration fees by CPI (10.7%) for 2023/24 and to agree to increase all vessel/vehicle/plant fees by 33%.**

7.1.4 2023/24 Capital Expenditure Proposal- Mrs Cleary stated she had touched on this briefly in 7.1.3.

**The Conservators voted unanimously to approve the proposed capital expenditure for 2023/24 and to request the General Purposes Committee review the funds and requirements for capital expenditure over following two years in light of the adopted Business Plan, once adopted.**

7.1.5 2022/23 Financial Report- Mrs Cleary spoke to her report on the financial difficulties being experienced to date in the current economic climate. The budget will not be exceeded greatly, with savings in some areas, expenditure in others. The financial situation is holding steady.

7.1.6 Baits Bite Property Update- Mrs Cleary stated that the rental properties at Baits Bite are costing a lot to maintain, and there will be little rental income left after the expenditure on their upkeep. Cllr Bradnam stated the properties are currently being put up for sale. Mrs Cleary stated the matter is now with lawyers and estate agents.

7.1.7 Pensions Cessation Update- covered previously in meeting.

7.1.8 Legal Expenses regarding the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant (CWWTP) relocation- The Clerk updated the meeting as to the proposals, namely, to move the works to the opposite bank of the Cam. The only direct effect to the Conservancy is on the outflow where it affects the navigation during construction. The normal process would be for a Section 15 Agreement however the works will be subject to a Development Consent Order, which supersedes any requirements of the Conservancy' statutes. The Conservancy has spent money on legal advice on the matter, and Anglian Water have been approached for reimbursement and compensation. Their response was the offer of £5000 towards legal costs. Our legal advisors HCR Hewitsons have



## CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

*Navigation authority for the River Cam, between Cambridge and Bottisham Lock*

advised that the limit has almost been reached for work they have carried out. They wish to know how we wish to proceed. Should matters change drastically once works start it might be possible to get further legal advice funding, but this is not guaranteed.

**The Conservators voted unanimously to approve limiting legal work on the CWWTPR project unless considered essential and to delegate authority to the General Purposes Committee to monitor and assess the legal requirements.**

- 7.1.9 Conservators House Building Proposals- Mr Wotherspoon left the meeting at this point having declared an interest. The Clerk explained the past ownership of Conservators House by the Conservancy, its sale and the clauses attached to the sale. The current owner wrote last year to ask for the Conservators approval to vary the clauses with regards to a major extension to the property. This was granted. The clerk stated a new request had been received for waste water disposal, a replacement of an existing gate, and the creation of a holiday home on the site of the former cottage building adjoining to the Conservancy offices. Cllr Bradnam referred to the documents attached to the agenda as a point of reference. The Clerk stated the matter had been considered by the GPC, and they were recommending that the terms of the clauses attached to the sale not be varied. The clauses stated it could not be used other than as ancillary to the main dwelling. It was made very clear at the time of the sale. The site in question is next to the working mooring area for the Conservancy and is not suitable for the proposed purpose. Cllr Bradnam stated the waste water proposals would not affect the Conservancy, but that a further clause stated no structure could be erected along the boundary where the owner proposes to replace a gate. It is suggested that further plans showing the proposed gate be asked for to clarify details, that the waste water proposals be agreed, subject to no further works being required on the pipeline, but the holiday let request not be approved. Cllr Thornburrow stated that a planning application for the cottage would not consider the clauses as part of the process. It would be a civil legal matter for the Conservancy. Mr Judge queried the access of the property onto the towpath and whether this would be the case. Cllr Bradnam said no specific plans had been seen. The Clerk stated the GPC discussed that the clauses had been imposed for valid and justifiable reasons, and it had only been a few years, and nothing had changed on the site. Mrs Cleary confirmed that the area was a busy working environment and that fencing had been required to stop access to the work boats. It is the proposed use that causes concern.
- The Conservators voted unanimously to accept the General Purposes Committee recommendations to adhere to the restrictions laid out in the Deed of Sale, to request drawn plans for the proposed gate, and to delegate authority in this matter to the GPC to respond and resolve on their behalf.**



## CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

*Navigation authority for the River Cam, between Cambridge and Bottisham Lock*

- 7.1.10 Jesus Lock Survey- Mrs Cleary referred to the copy of the survey sent to Conservators for their reference. She appealed for a Conservator or a working group to work on the project with her on the matter. (Mr Wotherspoon re-joined the meeting at this point) Mrs Cleary explained there is a ten year cycle of lock work, and with two locks this means expenditure every two years. The work is unique and extensive, and a budgeted figure is £250,000 per lock per five years. The review of Jesus Lock has been delayed by two years, and the survey has cost £40,000. Cllr Bradnam asked for the scope for a working party. Mrs Cleary stated that they would work with the GPC looking at the costings and proposed works in consultation with the surveyor and River and Rural. Whether to replace or repair, work previously carried out and putting together a report for the GPC to consider. Cllr Thornburrow offered to participate. Mr Wotherspoon asked whether an observer might be able to assist, and Mrs Cleary pointed out that financial costs and contractor privacy might preclude this. Observers might be able to be drawn in if needed. Mr Brown referred to having a confidentiality clause drawn up. Cllr Bradnam asked Father Goode if he might be interested on those terms, and he agreed. Mr Wotherspoon referred to two time periods referred to in the report (15 and 25 years) for works as being a large variation. Mrs Cleary confirmed this would be something covered by the working party. Mr Watson pointed out a couple of errors and omission in the report. Mrs Cleary asked that he email details to her.

**The Conservators voted unanimously to delegate authority for the scrutiny and review of the Jesus Lock survey in the first instance to the General Purposes Committee, to whom the CEO and Conservator Cllr Thornburrow will report back to.**

(the meeting adjourned for coffee and resumed at 12.30, with item 8)

### 8. Officers Reports

- 8.1.1 CEO Report- Mrs Cleary stated some of her report had previously been covered earlier in the meeting with regards to finance. She spoke of the changes the organisation has gone through and continues to go through and will continue to go through. There have been some issues, and adjustments such as working with an outside provider in River and Rural who are new, and working together is important. There are only five officers trying to carry out all the tasks required by the Conservators, two of whom are part-time. The Clerk's role has exceeded its part time status. Mrs Cleary stated that the twelve month contract would end in March, and the GPC would be considering the role. She thanked the officers for the work that they do, and that each role is different and separate. We are managing change and it is



## CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

*Navigation authority for the River Cam, between Cambridge and Bottisham Lock*

progressing. There are still outstanding works to be done on the company vessels and the navigation this quarter. There is an annual cycle of works. It is a learning process, but it is progressing. There have been huge changes but in the main the officers are carrying out the Conservator's remit. Cllr Bradnam extended her thanks to Mrs Cleary as CEO for her commitment to the Conservancy. Cllr Bradnam reflected on the changes for the better that have happened since she joined the Conservators in 2018, including the frailty of finances which have been shored up by property sales, and not having assistance from local authorities, despite the river being a tourist attraction. Conservators need a wealth of knowledge and determination to help the Conservancy, and for Conservators to make their appointing bodies aware of what happens.

There was discussion between those present on the matter of agendas and papers for meetings being available to those who wish to see them, and what is public, what is confidential and when matters can be disseminated to river user groups and other interested parties. Cllr Bradnam requested that it be minuted that a short agenda be published on the website at least seven days before a Full Body Quarterly meeting.

- 8.2 River Patrol Officer Report- Mr Partridge referred to the licensing report which indicates a healthier financial position than in previous years. Mr Partridge has been visiting registration defaulters to assist them. He thanked Mr Ingersent for pointing out a sluice issue on the river, which was rectified by communication with the Environment agency. Mr Separovic stated that calling the emergency number was always the best option to seek assistance. Cllr Bradnam suggested that if anyone calls they should make a note of the case number and pass it on to the officers. Mr Greenfield enquired whether other sluices at Mill Pool and Byrons Pool are controlled by the EA. It was confirmed Mill Pool is the responsibility of the City Council who are to repair the automatic function. Mr Separovic stated he would find out if Byrons Pool was an EA responsibility. Cllr Bradnam thanked Mr Partridge for his work with vulnerable river users.

### 9. Dates of Future Full Body Quarterly Meetings-

16<sup>th</sup> Feb 2023 (Re Business Plan) The Guildhall, Cambridge

27<sup>th</sup> Apr 2023, The Guildhall, Cambridge

27<sup>th</sup> Jul 2023, The Guildhall, Cambridge

26<sup>th</sup> Oct 2023, The Guildhall, Cambridge

### 10. Any Other Business

Conservators Day- 'Getting to Know You' and Training- Mrs Cleary explained that there had already been one productive day last year, where officers met with new Conservators. It had been an opportunity for them



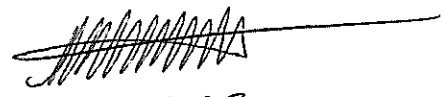
## CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

*Navigation authority for the River Cam, between Cambridge and Bottisham Lock*

to meet and talk in a less formal and more relaxed environment. The purpose of a Conservator Day would also be to educate Conservators in their role and responsibilities as part of a Body Corporate, e.g., Health and Safety and HR, and anything else incumbent on the role. A suitable location and date, to accommodate everyone needs to be found, for what is proposed to be an educational but informal opportunity to meet. It is likely to be a weekend, and in a village hall local to Clayhithe, with lunch. It is unlikely to take place before April. The intention is by July. An indicative vote was taken as to whether a half or whole day, weekend or week was preferable. There was no conclusive choice, and a Doodle poll was suggested, and whether anyone had a suitable venue.

Cllr Thornburrow raised the matter of the resilience of the river in terms of navigation in the current climate crisis. She expressed concern over drought and flooding, and that she would like to see a working group investigate what the risks are. Cllr Bradnam suggested it be raised as an agenda item at the next meeting for further discussion, perhaps at the meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

**The meeting closed at 12.57pm.**

  
4.5.23