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**British Waterways Scotland Group**

**Minutes of Meeting Held on Thursday 20 May 2004 @ 0930 hours**

**In The Offices of Inverness & Nairn Enterprise, The Green House,**

**Beechwood Business Park North, Inverness**

**Present:** Susan Achmatowicz  
Campbell Christie (Chairman)  
Ian Darling  
Professor George Fleming  
George Greener  
Guthrie Hutton  
Jane Karwoski  
Eva McCracken  
Kenneth MacKenzie  
Rod Michie  
Richard Millham  
Sandra Purves  
Stewart Sim  
James Simpson  
Jim Stirling

**In Attendance:** Robin Evan, Chief Executive British Waterways; George Ballinger, Chief Engineer, Scotland; Jonathan Bryant, Commercial Manager, Scotland; Nicola Christie, Legal & Corporate Affairs & Pam Swanson, Manager, Highland Canals

Patricia Rettie (Minutes)

<b>Minute</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Action</b>
	<p>The Chairman, Campbell Christie, opened the meeting and welcomed all in attendance, with a special welcome to the new members and Robin Evans.</p> <p>CC thanked Rod Michie for organising the tour of the refurbished Muirtown Locks, Caley Marina and the boat trip. It was agreed that this was an informative tour for all members of the Group, especially for the new members.</p> <p>CC then invited everyone round the table to introduce themselves and give a brief summary of their backgrounds.</p>	
<b>SG 107</b>	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>There were no apologies.</p>	

<b>SG 108</b>	<p><b>Minutes of Previous Meeting</b></p> <p>It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting of 4 March 2004 were correct.</p>	
<b>SG 109</b>	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p>SG99 – JS updated the Group on how The Waterways Trust Scotland (TWTS) are now actively making progress in developing an education programme in Scotland. Karen Moore, Head of Development for TWTS, has had a meeting with John Butterly of the WOW team and They are planning to fundraise for a WOW Co-ordinator to be managed by TWTS, to promote the WOW website and teacher resources to primary schools in Scotland. They will also provide Water Safety Education to 50 local schools close to the canals and develop a marketing plan for WOW in Scotland.</p> <p>GG suggested that Scotland should be keeping in touch and sharing experience with those involved in this work south of the border and spoke of the meeting with Charles Clarke, Secretary of State for Education and Skills, who is greatly interested in the educational potential of the waterways, and how it can be linked to other initiatives within education and sport.</p> <p>CC suggests that this should be put to Peter Peacock MSP, Minister for Education &amp; Young People.</p> <p>CC also updated the Group on John Martin's retirement as Head of the Transport Group at the Scottish Executive and informed them that BW had held a retirement dinner for him, in recognition of his contribution to BW. His replacement John Ewing will be attending the BW Board Dinner on 2 June. John Martin is returning in advisory capacity to a Steering Group, as part of the current Defra/Scottish Executive Quinquennial Review.</p> <p>CC then asked for an update on funding for 2004/2005. JS responded that BWS has constructed a Business Plan based on a balanced budget plus an extra £2 million to allow BWS to carry forward the Caledonian Locks Programme. JS also spoke of the Spending Review, which is underway within the Scottish Executive. BW has provided funding information with the Business Plan and is in regular contact with its funding department.</p> <p>GG suggested that BW should meet with the Minister for Transport prior to the BW Scotland Annual Meeting.</p>	<p>Action JS&amp;CC to arrange meeting with Minister</p>
<b>SG 110</b>	<p><b>Introduction to Scotland's Canals – Jim Stirling</b></p> <p>JS gave this presentation mainly for the benefit of the newly appointed members to the Group, as an introduction to what BW does, and to the canals, demonstrating the diversity of BW's overall role.</p>	

<p><b>SG 111</b></p>	<p><b>The Highland Canals – Pam Swanson</b></p> <p>Pam Swanson introduced herself to the Group and informed them that she had previously worked with British Airways for a number of years in roles ranging from Personnel Management to Customer Service Management. PS went on to outline her role in BW. This is twofold encompassing Manager of the Highland Canals, responsible for all aspects of delivery and Service Manager responsible for all areas of customer service and development within Scotland.</p> <p>PS then explained the structure of her team. This includes a Customer Service Manager, responsible for the Admin &amp; Customer Service Teams, an Engineering Operations Manager, Property and Estates Manager and a Manager for the Crinan Canal, all with appropriate teams to assist in achieving delivery.</p> <p>The next part of her presentation covered key achievements to date on the Highland canals and the way forward as being meeting customer expectations in an affordable way, through engineering excellence, improved facilities, operating hours that meet customer needs and developing partnerships to bring about these aspirations.</p> <p>CC thanked PS for her contribution.</p> <p>GG asked PS how far she thinks she has come, in her new position, in winning the hearts and minds of her people towards getting them to work to deliver this service. PS replied that she felt she was about half way there and that she is working to gain the trust of both customers and colleagues in order to move forward.</p> <p>RE asked PS how she would balance this with the praise the Operators and customers have for the staff on the canals. PS responded that people are very committed to the business and that she is aware the general view is that operational staff are great and management is not so good and that she believes the Team are excellent and given time perceptions will change.</p> <p>SP made the point that similar problems are experienced on the Lowland Canals and that she believes the problems are not just with relationships with BW and customers, but that in many cases the customers are uncertain of what they want. SP suggested that there is a need for better dialogue between the two in order to get the correct message across to customers.</p>	
<p><b>SG 112</b></p>	<p><b>Asset Management Throughout Scotland – George Ballinger</b></p> <p>GB opened his presentation by stating that Asset Management is the way we manage the canal infrastructure to provide a safe high quality environment for our customers by managing the allocation of funds effectively. GB explained that there are 757 Principal BW Assets in Scotland and 976 Non Principal Assets. All these assets are catalogued and are regularly inspected and assigned a condition</p>	

	<p>grade ranging from A, which is a sound construction, well maintained, to E, which is a structure about to go out of commission with a risk of failure. GB followed this with an overview of BW assets and works carried out.</p> <p>SA asked how effective BW is in project management for budgeting, monitoring and ensuring good value for money on its projects. GB responded by using the example of the Caledonian Locks programme where they had to look at developing new techniques for restoring the locks in order to drive down the costs and that monitoring of projects to ensure delivery of best value is done by Post Project Appraisal (PPA). Our use of PPA is patchy.</p> <p>RE agreed that PPA is a good method of achieving this, but Pre-Project Review is also needed.</p> <p>GG made the point that this process will be changing and lessons learned will be discussed at the next Audit Committee and Board Meeting.</p>	
<p><b>SG 113</b></p>	<p><b>Jonathan Bryant</b></p> <p>JB began by informing the Group that the Commercial department in Scotland embraces Property and The Falkirk Wheel &amp; Visitor Centre, together with the development of business ideas and income streams.</p> <p>JB followed with an update on the Joint Venture between BW and Miller Developments at Edinburgh Quay, which is a £60 million project. Phase I is due to complete this summer, comprising a mix of office, leisure and residential property.</p> <p>Another site of interest to BW in this area is the former Fountain Brewery site. The City of Edinburgh Council have hosted a workshop, which takes in this site, working up ideas proposing a mixed use development, taking into account the local community. BW has had discussion with this group and will continue to work with the Council.</p> <p>JB then explained that a Masterplan is being developed for The Falkirk Wheel. Its purpose is to determine a clear plan for the site and surrounding area for the immediate, medium and long-term future.</p> <p>JB then outlined key features of the Highland markets.</p> <p>GF emphasised the importance of the freight trade on the Crinan Canal and asked about plans for transportation of freight on the Lowland Canals. JB responded that he is meeting with East Dunbartonshire Council to discuss this and JS reminded the Group of the transportation of aggregate through the Lowland Canals in July 2003, the first for 70 years.</p> <p>Jim Simpson raised the point that the income from the timber shipments from Ardrishaig Pier is quite low. JS responded that essentially this is for the use of the pier, BW does not do loading and</p>	



	him meet with GG, CC & JS to discuss other matters.	
<b>SG 115</b>	<p><b>Jim Stirling – General Update</b></p> <p>Scottish Enterprise plan to have a Business Barge located at The Falkirk Wheel, for the first ten days, from 14 June. The Barge will then be sailing through the Lowland Canals during the remainder of June, through July and August, as a Small Business Gateway, to promote Business Development on the Lowland Canals.</p> <p>At the Scottish Boat Show, to be held from 13 to 15 August, at The Falkirk Wheel, the Enterprise Island Scheme will be launched. Entrepreneurs will be invited to put forward business ideas. Coaching and assistance will be given to 10 to 15 of these entrants. The scheme will be supported by Scottish Enterprise Forth Valley, BP and BW. They will use The Millennium Link Barge.</p> <p>The First of the new trip boats, for use at The Falkirk Wheel, will be delivered at the beginning of June with the second to follow approximately five weeks later.</p> <p>KMcK asked if these boats would have full disabled access and would all future boats include such access. JS confirmed this to be correct.</p> <p>EMcC asked if it would be the policy of the BWSG that all future boats would have full access. CC&amp;GG agreed that should be policy, but may be difficult to guarantee for every type of vessel, e.g. for any special activities.</p> <p>SA asked if under the Disability Discrimination Act, due to come into force from October 2004, would BW not, by law, be legislated into providing disabled access on all trip boats. GG responded that BW is in full agreement with the policy, but must be practicable and reasonable. BW will comply and go beyond that where possible. CC stated that this is to be debated at BW Board level.</p> <p>As the new trip boat for The Falkirk Wheel is being delivered by road, GF said that he would like the Group to see a comparison of the costs for transporting the boat by road to that of the costs for transporting by water. CC agreed that in principle BW would want to transport by water, but where costs were too high alternatives should be considered.</p> <p>On the matter of the new charging regime for the Caledonian Canal Commercial Operators, a letter has now been sent to all Operators implementing the new charging regime. New Trading Agreements with each commercial user, reflecting this system, are to be introduced.</p>	
<b>SG 116</b>	<p><b>Issues Ahead of The Public Meeting</b></p> <p>The main issues expected to arise at The Public Meeting are:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fees – private boating &amp; commercial</li> <li>• Community Relations</li> <li>• Fort Augustus Housing</li> <li>• The Southern Distributor Road</li> <li>• Trailable Boats</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed the panel would consist of Campbell Christie, Jim Stirling and Pam Swanson, with support from other members of the Group as appropriate.</p>	
<b>SG 117</b>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><b>Grangemouth Water Sales</b></p> <p>NC circulated a news item from the Sunday Times Newspaper of 16 May 2004 re BW's complaint to the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) about Scottish Water's anti-competitive behaviour. BW sent follow up material. BW has had a meeting with the OFT and is working on its submission to OFT.</p> <p>GG informed the meeting that arrangements were in place for a telephone conference between himself and Professor Alexander, Chairman of Scottish Water. In early June Robin Evans, Chief Executive of British Waterways and Jim Stirling will be meeting with Jon Hargreaves, Chief Executive of Scottish Water and Chris Banks, Commercial Director.</p> <p><b>The Scottish Boat Show at The Falkirk Wheel</b></p> <p>GF suggests that the Hogans of Caley Marina should be encouraged to participate in this.</p>	
<b>SG 118</b>	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>The next meeting of the BWSG will take place on 25 November 2004 at The Falkirk Wheel.</p>	