



WATERWAYS OMBUDSMAN COMMITTEE
Minutes of the meeting held at
Canal & River Trust, The Toll House, Delamere Terrace, Little Venice
London, W2 6ND
on Monday 03 July 2017 at 10100a.m.

Present:

Steve Harriott (SH)	Chair (Independent)
Kevin Fitzgerald (KF)	Independent Member
Janet Hogben (JH)	Canal & River Trust Representative
Gill Eastwood (GE)	Canal & River Trust Representative

Apologies

Jenny Murley (JM)	Independent Member
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In attendance:

Andrew Walker (AW)	Ombudsman
Richard Parry (RP)	Chief Executive, Canal & River Trust (present in part)
Tom Deards (TD)	Head of Legal, Canal & River Trust (present in part)
Yetunde Salami (YS)	Canal & River Trust, Assistant Company Secretary (minutes)

Action

1. Welcome & Apologies

Apologies noted as above.

It was noted that notice of the meeting had been given to all members entitled to receive it.

Declarations of interest

Gill Eastwood declared her interest as the Trust's Head of Governance, Audit & Risk.

Janet Hogben declared her interest as a Trustee of Canal & River Trust and as a resident of a flat in a block of flats by Regent's Canal at Kings Cross.

No other interests were declared.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd July 2017

- 2.1 Members present noted and subject to a minor amendment, adopted the minutes of the meeting as an accurate record of that meeting.

3. Matters Arising

- 3.1 All matters arising were in hand or on the agenda.
- 3.2 Presentation by Canal & River Trust on Continuous Cruising
- 3.3 Richard Parry and Tom Deards spoke with the Committee on the Trust's approach to Continuous Cruising. This followed a number of complaints to the Ombudsman on this issue and the Committee wanted to invite the Trust to this meeting to better understand the Trust's approach.

Following the discussion, it was agreed that:

- TD and GE will discuss issues around second level complaints process outside this meeting
- TD agreed to consider the Ombudsman suggestions going forward.

4. Report of the Waterways Ombudsman to the Committee

- 4.1 AW gave highlights of his report and talked through his caseload since the last meeting up until as at 27th June 2017. Three investigations had been closed, there are three open investigations and no open enquiries.

During the discussion of various, it was noted that the Trust now had a dedicated staff for complaints and is dealing with issues around some vexatious complaints.

New Business – Regarding new organisations joining the Scheme, it was agreed that base costs would be apportioned depending on the size of the organisation and the case costs would be charged directly to the organisation.

SH/AW and GE would progress a memorandum of understanding between the Ombudsman and new organisations joining the Ombudsman scheme.

SH/
GE/AW

Business Continuity Plan – AW would examine whether a back-up of the WO data could be safely and securely stored in the cloud. He would also provide an encrypted and password-protected document to the Chair and one other independent Committee member with details of how data can be accessed if the need arises.

5 Annual Report

- 5.1 The draft report was discussed and it was agreed that
- SH would update the Committee's information in pages 3 to 8.
 - Members would send their comments on the main report to AW
 - The final draft would be approved by email
 - GE would send a mini biography of JH and herself to AW

SH
ALL
ALL
GE

6. CRT Administrative Support

- 6.1 GE explained that the Trust had traditionally provided administrative support to the Committee but there is no current documentation in place to support the service. GE presented a draft formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) relating to this administrative support to the Committee for adoption. GE further invited the Committee to specify the length of time it wishes the Trust to retain Committee papers and other documentation. It was noted that the Ombudsman is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office. Members discussed and agreed that:
- The MOU should be amended to include (i) a preamble reinstating the independence of the Ombudsman, (ii) that the service is only to the Committee as directed by the Chair of the Committee and (iii) that there is no fee for this service. **GE**
 - The MOU should be published on the Ombudsman's website. **AW**

7. Update on Customer Service Tracking

- 7.1 The Committee noted that feedback had been positive and commended AW for this. Future reports would refer to responses and not notes. **AW**

8. Financial Update

- 8.1 The Committee noted the financial update.
- It was noted that the Scheme's rules provide that the Trust shall pay the Ombudsman's fees and that the payment is administered by the Chair of this Committee. AW to check whether the basis of the Ombudsman's fees is published on his website. **AW**

9. Any Other Business

- 09.1 Rotation of the Committee's independent members as well as recruitment of new members will be discussed at the next meeting. SH and GE to progress. **SH/GE**

10. Dates of Future Meetings

- 10.1 Monday 6th November 2017 – This meeting should be cancelled and rescheduled to hold a week earlier. YS to send out new calendar invites. **YS**
- 10.2 YS to agree dates for 2018 meetings with SH and other members. **YS**

11. Close of Meeting

- 11.1 There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 11.55a.m.

Chairman