



WATERWAYS OMBUDSMAN COMMITTEE
Minutes of the meeting held at
Canal & River Trust, The Toll House, Delamere Terrace, Little Venice
London, W2 6ND
on Monday 30 October 2017 at 10.00a.m.

Present:

Steve Harriott (SH)	Chair (Independent)
Kevin Fitzgerald (KF)	Independent Member
Jenny Murley (JM)	Independent Member
Gill Eastwood (GE)	Canal & River Trust Representative

Apologies

Janet Hogben (JH)	Canal & River Trust Representative
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In attendance:

Andrew Walker (AW)	Ombudsman
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's interest was noted as a Canal & River Trust Representative 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 the minutes. Members adopted the minutes of the meeting as an accurate record subject to an amendment for GE to check a sentence with the Head of Legal, which was subsequently resolved after the meeting. YS will send the amended minutes to AW for publication on the Ombudsman's website.

GE
YS/AW

3. Matters Arising

- 3.1 All matters arising were in hand or on the agenda. AW and GE would progress the publication of the basis of the Ombudsman's fees on the website.

AW/GE

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 23 October 2017. Two investigations had been closed, there are five open investigations and two open enquiries.

During the discussion members noted that:

- AW attended the annual public meeting of the Manchester, Pennine and Potteries Waterways Partnership on 13 July, which gave him an opportunity to meet local waterways representatives
- There are delays in resolving some issues with the Trust due to complaints administration which is in turn impacting on the Ombudsman's work. GE will progress this with relevant staff within the Trust.

GE

It was agreed that GE will;

- seek clarity from the Trust's Legal team about issues around closure of linear moorings;
- check the Trust's position on smoke emissions;
- look into issues around the length of time the Trust had taken to respond to a complaint about the Boat Safety Scheme (BSS).

GE

GE

GE

Redacted

- 4.2 *CTSI annual report* - This will be published on the Ombudsman website in the next few days.

AW

Business continuity planning – AW has created encrypted and password-protected Word document which lists the information needed to access his devices, documents and accounts. He will send a copy to SH.

AW

- 4.3 The rest of the report was noted.

5 Redacted

6. Succession Planning

- 6.1 SH presented his report which sets out a proposal for the succession planning for both the Waterways Ombudsman and the Waterways Ombudsman Committee. Highlights of the report includes

Ombudsman - the need to have a transition arrangement for the next Ombudsman before AW's appointment expires in October 2019. [post meeting note: the Ombudsman has subsequently decided to retire in July 2019]. It is important that there a handover period before the expiration date. It was agreed the recruitment for a new Ombudsman would commence in January 2019 and the Trust would assist in the recruitment process.

Committee Members - It was noted that the initial term of office of the 3 independent members expires in February 2018 and to avoid a situation where they all leave at the same time there a need for a managed transition

Action

recruitment of new members. The independent members can continue in post for a second term until February 2021. Members agreed that renewal of their terms was not automatic, the Chair would appraise performance and members would get back to him offline if they had any concerns which would be discussed at the next meeting.

SH/ALL

Members noted the succession plan table as below:

Succession Plan												
Waterways Ombudsman												
	Feb 2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
SH	INITIAL TERM [CHAIR]		SECOND TERM									
KF	INITIAL TERM		SECOND TERM									
JM	INITIAL TERM		SECOND TERM									
NEW					INITIAL TERM							
NEW					6 months observer		INITIAL TERM					
NEW					6 months observer		INITIAL TERM					
NEW					6 months observer		INITIAL TERM					
GE				INITIAL TERM		SECOND TERM						
JH				INITIAL TERM		SECOND TERM						

GE to project plan the two recruitment exercises and to present a report on the plan and cost of both at the autumn 2018 meeting.[post meeting note: GE subsequently agreed to report on the plan and the cost at the summer meeting]

GE

Chair – SH stated that he had decided to offer to step down as Chair after the expiry of his initial term in February 2018. Following discussion, it was agreed that SH will discuss with KF and JM offline.

SH/KF/JM

YS to include the appointment of independent Committee members and the Chair to the agenda for the next meeting.

YS

7. Update on Customer Service Tracking

7.1 The report was noted.

8. Financial Update

8.1 The Committee noted the financial update.

GE

9. Any Other Business

09.1 None.

10. Date of Next Meeting

10.1 12 March 2018

11. Close of Meeting

11.1 There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 11.10 a.m.

Chairman