SUSSEX YACHT CLUB
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MAIN COMMITTEE
Held on Monday 18th August 2025

Meeting begun at 19:00

Item	Actioned By	When to do
Versadock Proposal	**DL**	**September meeting**

	Title	Name and Initials
Present	**Flag Officers**	Robin Stevenson (RS) – Commodore, Sue Large (SLa) – Vice Commodore, Neville Blake (NB) – Rear Commodore, Chris Hawkes (CH) – Rear Commodore, , Aidan Tuckett (Treasurer),
	Directors	Martin O'Sullivan (MO), Terry Kinch (TK), Dave Lee (DL), Yvonne Campbell (YC), Giles Weston (GW), Des Silverson (DS), Kevin Knight (KK), Anne Gisby (AG),
	Ex-officio	Ruby Alabone (RA) – Minute Secretary, Paul Fisher (PF) – General Manager, Ian O'Dell (IO) - Ex officio
Apologies	**Directors**	Gemma Hawkes (GH), Jon Ellman-Brown (JEB), Kevin Headon (KH), Erika Peck (EP),
Absent	**Directors**	

Sla, DS, MOS, DL attended the meeting virtually via Teams.

KH joined the meeting at 1905hrs

1. **Apologies and Absences**

   Apologies were received from Erika Peck and Gemma Hawkes, Kevin Headon, Jon Ellman-Brown.

2. **Declarations of Interest**
   No specific declarations of interest were raised during this section of the meeting. The Commodore reminded members of their ongoing responsibility to declare any potential conflicts that might arise during discussions.

3. **Last meeting – Adoption of the minutes**

   Proposal: Adoption of July Board Minutes
   Proposed: Commodore; In favour: 11; Against: None; Abstained; CH, AT

4. **Matters Arising and Actions from Previous Meeting**

   Covered in the agenda items

5. **Update on Flood Defence Wall**

RS presented the board with drawings of the proposed developments for the flood defence wall and outlined realistic areas for construction both on the wall and in its surrounding areas. He noted his understanding that the ADC project manager has recruited a contractor and confirmed he would speak directly with the project manager about arranging a meeting with them. In response to a question from KK about access to the west shed, RS explained that the sheds would likely need to be deconstructed to accommodate the development of the wall, though this has not yet been agreed. He added that temporary shipping containers may be required for storage in the meantime.

YC raised concerns about pedestrian access to the clubhouse. RS drew attention to possible access routes, noting that the option from Mariners Point would not be safe as it would intrude too much into-the boat yard. He confirmed that design work is ongoing to ensure adequate entryways to the clubhouse, but also highlighted the complications in sending designs back to contractors due to risk management issues. YC sought reassurance regarding the 12m opening, and RS confirmed that the aim was to reach a result that would satisfy club members.

The discussion turned to planning permission for the workshop building. YC noted the level of infrastructure required and the importance of pushing ADC on design aspects, to which GW confirmed planning permission had already been granted alongside the clubhouse building. RS added that the only requirement from ADC on the Bosuns Facility and other storage and commercially let units should be the design for the foundations, these need to work alongside the new flood defence wall construction

There was discussion around the use of shipping containers for storage, with RS cautioning against creating an appearance like a shipping yard that could be viewed negatively by flat owners.

RS presented details relating to the flood wall gate, explaining that planning permission included specific conditions relating to vehicle type, routes, parking, deliveries, loading and unloading, site security, highway contamination, and public engagement. YC queried whether ADC would be responsible for site security, and RS clarified that while it is traditionally the responsibility of the contractor, a collaborative approach would be required. The responsibility for opening and closing the gate during flood events was also discussed. RS noted the club was seeking to influence operational decisions, but TK reiterated that SYC should not hold responsibility, as ultimate control and liability rests with ADC as landowner. Via electronic signalling.

RS highlighted a key meeting scheduled for 11th September 2025 to finalise the main agreement, with solicitors engaged to assist in drafting the Heads of Terms document. He requested GW's support with this and reminded the board that, as outlined in Appendix 1 of their letter, ADC had agreed to cover legal fees, though he would prefer

ADC provide support directly with design and building work rather than allocating budget for documentation alone. RS and TK asked the board to consider additional areas for discussion via future Teams meetings, and RS confirmed that a draft agreement would be provided to ADC before the next board meeting.

When KK asked about the project start date, RS confirmed that ADC had indicated December, but he believed that while works may not commence until after Christmas, YC pressed on the timing and RS agreed the project was imminent. YC also raised concerns about the loss of car parking during the works, which RS confirmed, noting that the space would be full of boats including outriggers and SB20s. RS suggested it would be simpler to communicate to members that there will be no parking available, though he acknowledged YC's concerns regarding accessibility for disabled members and confirmed adaptations would be possible. AT queried whether a penalty clause was in place, but both TK and RS confirmed there was not.

6. **Update on ASR Launch**

PF provided a recap of previous discussions regarding the ASR and informed the board that Mr. Fairbairn is seeking compensation. He confirmed that discussions have taken place with barristers and that the matter is being pursued through legal negotiation. PF reported that CCTV installation around the site is scheduled for later this week to improve safety and explained that, following efforts to act reasonably and fairly with Mr. Fairbairn, a letter will be issued confirming the injunction and the disposal of the boat by cutting it up. He noted that the estimated cost of the injunction is in excess of £2,000. RS emphasised the continuing need for further security enhancements.

7. **New Club Rules**

RS noted that extensive discussion on this matter had taken place prior to the meeting and explained that the purpose of this meeting was to vote on the adoption of these rules taking into account the issues already considered. YC raised a comment regarding Rule 3, suggesting the inclusion of the term "without prejudice." GW strongly disagreed, considering the addition unnecessary. Sla offered a an observation on YC's suggestion, noting that the term tended to apply to parties in negotiation where an informal offer might be considered, so may not be useful in this context. DL expressed concern with Rules 36–37, questioning their enforceability as they are frequently broken, and too ambiguous to enforce~~.~~ GW responded that all rules fall under the Board's authority and that it is the duty of the committee to ensure rules are enforced and if necessary delegated appropriately. DL maintained that greater clarification of the rules is required. RS reminded the board that the amendments are intended as a tidy-up of the existing rules, addressing weaknesses, and emphasised that, if adopted, there would remain opportunities to revise them further to ensure clarity.

RS confirmed the rules will be published for 30 days and discussed the best methods for circulating them to members. He also thanked GW and TL for their efforts in preparing the amendments.

Proposal: Adoption of New Club Rules as published on teams
Proposed: Commodore; In favour: 12; Against: 1; Abstained:0

8. SYCOPS Update

SLa provided an update via Teams, recalling discussions from the previous meeting and reporting on SYCOPS' performance which has been encouraging. She ~~proudly~~ also noted that SYCOPS had not needed to draw fully on the loan provided by SYC Ltd and had already begun repayments, and expect more loan will be made in Q4 although it is unlikely that it will be fully repaid by the end of this financial year. SLa informed the Board that further advice had therefore been sought from the head of the ACASCs who confirmed the criteria that the loan must satisfy

She also reported that both budgets were being recast in light of the flood wall building works and the potential impact of the disruption involved.

DL asked whether this presented an opportunity to rebrand the operation. SLa agreed that a rebranding might dovetail well with the work of the working party currently exploring the objectives for Stow's, but could not be possible until the wall was complete.

DL also raised franchising as a possibility for running the bar and restaurant . SLa clarified that franchising was not currently under consideration, as this is not viable given our VAT arrangements with HMRC.

9. Any Other Business

CH requested a regular schedule of pontoon jet washing at Southwick, noting that it was causing equipment damage. He also confirmed that a survey for the keelboat section would remain open until 4th – 5th September, with results to be presented at the main keelboat meeting on 18th September.

RS remarked that it was unusual to have a split decision at the Board and stressed the importance of presenting a unified narrative and supporting the decision that has been made once matters had been fully debated.

DS confirmed his abstention from voting due to medical requirements.

RS further advised that dinghy owners would be asked to remove their boats from the site, with the remaining car park space allocated to outriggers, SB20s, and other storage needs.

He emphasized the need for a strong push to clear dinghies from the premises and confirmed that containers would be provided to support storage requirements.

Meeting closed at 20:28 pm

Date of Following Meetings –

Monday 15th September 1900h
Monday 20th October 1900h

Approved by: R.S, Commodore
Signed: ___________________