SUSSEX YACHT CLUB
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MAIN COMMITTEE
Held on Monday 15th September 2025

Meeting begun at 19:00

Item	Actioned By	When to do

	Title	Name and Initials
Present	**Flag Officers**	Robin Stevenson (RS) – Commodore, Sue Large (SLa) – Vice Commodore, Aidan Tuckett (AT) 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), Kevin Headon (KH), Erika Peck (EP),
	Ex-officio	Ruby Alabone (RA) – Minute Secretary, Paul Fisher (PF) – General Manager, Ian O'Dell (IO) - Ex officio
Apologies	**Directors**	Gemma Hawkes (GH), Neville Blake (NB) – Rear Commodore, Chris Hawkes (CH) – Rear Commodore, Jon Ellman-Brown (JEB)
Absent	**Directors**	

1. **Apologies and Absences**

   Apologies were received from Gemma Hawkes, Neville Blake, Chris Hawkes, 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**

   RS brought to the Board's attention an error found in Item 5, Paragraph 3 of the August minutes. RS proposed that the paragraph be reworded to reduce any potentially misleading wording and ensure the content remains in proper context. RS requested that the Board consider and vote on the proposed rewording under these changes.
   Proposal: Adoption of August Board Minutes
   Proposed: Commodore; In favour All: ; Against: None; Abstained DS;

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

Covered in the agenda items.

PF provided an update on the ASR, noting that there has been closer liaison with the police and that good progress has been made in addressing the matter. PF reported that an application for an injunction is in process with the intention of banning Mr. Fairbairn from SYC property to enable removal of the vessel.

5. **Update on Flood Defence Wall - EGM**

RS brought to the Board's attention the updated drawings and recent changes regarding the flood defence wall since its previous presentation. RS confirmed that no new additions had been made and noted that a meeting is scheduled with ADC, HOP (Hemsley Orell Designers - Consulting Civil, Structural & Marine Engineers), and the project managers to discuss the ongoing developments.

YC sought clarification on the funding responsibility for pedestrian access between the Dolphin Hard and the clubhouse. RS confirmed that this matter, along with other related concerns, will be discussed with ADC to determine which party will cover specific costs. RS further noted that no contractor has yet been appointed to the project and that all areas highlighted to the Board are considered high-risk for SYC. It was emphasized that sharing these requirements would be beneficial for the club and will reduce our financial risk in the project.

RS informed the Board that an agreement is being arranged with ADC to provide 10 temporary parking spaces, potentially available for weekend use, along with the possibility of an additional 10 spaces within the boatyard.
Regarding planning conditions, D.S. asked for clarification on whether the 10 parking spaces mentioned referred to those discussed previously. R.S. clarified that they do not, as the current spaces are located within the area marked by the pink hatch on the plans. He stressed that nothing has been finalised as yet.

GW and RS discussed the building materials proposed for the construction of the floodwall. GW also enquired whether ADC would ensure that the entryway to the clubhouse remains at a usable standard during the works so that members are not required to drive or walk through mud from the construction site to access the club.

RS reported that GW has supported the draft of the Heads of Terms, which are designed to protect SYC from any risks associated with incomplete project stages by the contractor.

EP informed the Board that a meeting is scheduled with ADC on Thursday, during which ADC will be submitting the CMP recommencement proposals. EP asked whether SYC would have the opportunity to review the draft prior to submission.
It was noted that the ownership and maintenance responsibilities of the floodwall must be agreed upon before the documents are uploaded to the planning portal, ensuring full transparency before being made available to the public.

RS expressed uncertainty as to how ADC could proceed with submission without first consulting SYC. ADC have, however, indicated their willingness to work collaboratively with SYC regarding the suitability and design of the flood defence gate.

EP further explained that when details are submitted, both internal and external bodies are involved, and asked when consultations would take place before the formal submission to discharge the planning condition. EP also cautioned the Board that a submission timeline of less than six weeks would be difficult to meet, suggesting that twelve weeks, by mid-December would be more realistic before submission and site commencement.

YC enquired whether there is any precedent for a yacht club having operational control of a flood defence wall in the UK. RS responded that the ownership and operational responsibility have not yet been determined.

MOS asked who would be responsible for testing the floodgate and how often it would occur (weekly or monthly). It was noted that SYC would need to ensure there are no blockages, though PF expressed the view that, if possible, this should not be SYC's responsibility and that the club should only take on limited operational duties.

AT asked about the project timeframe, to which RS replied that SYC had proposed a six-month schedule. This will be included in the list of questions for discussion at Thursday's meeting.

EP noted that a recent press release from ADC confirmed that a list of project costs and timelines would be presented at a joint committee meeting between ADC and Worthing District Council, with the agenda to be published five days in advance. EP read aloud two paragraphs from the report, confirming that both councils are currently £500,000 short of the required project funding, and that this shortfall will need to be addressed.

PF added that the potential merger of the councils could delay large CAPEX projects for three to four years, although optimism for progress remains high. It was acknowledged that construction inflation has contributed to the increased project budget.

RS confirmed that key updates will continue to be shared with the team via Microsoft Teams. DL requested that the related PowerPoint presentation be uploaded to the Teams platform, and RS agreed to arrange this.

PF informed the Board that the General Meeting would require 28 days' notice to members and is scheduled for Saturday, 18th October. The notice is to be uploaded within the current week. RS elaborated that the meeting would have a single-item agenda, seeking a vote in favour of the transfer of land, which would grant SYC the authority to sign the deed once all previously discussed conditions have been agreed upon.

RS emphasised the importance of conveying sufficient information to ensure that members are fully informed, whether attending in person or online.

SLa suggested that a careful narrative should be developed to ensure clarity and transparency in how the matter is presented to members. GW raised a query regarding the possibility of online voting in advance of the meeting.

After consideration, it was agreed that advance online voting would not be advisable, as relevant information will be presented at the time of the meeting. The Board also discussed methods to ensure that only shareholding members are eligible to vote.

RS confirmed that an architect has been asked to produce an artistic impression of the proposed floodwall to share with members, providing a visual representation of the planned development.

6. Nominations For Directors

PF informed the Board that, as of 1st October, nominations will open for those members wishing to stand down from the Board, with the opportunity to stand for re-election should they wish to continue after the completion of their tenure.

7. Stirlands Negotiations Update

RS informed the Board that three to four meeting dates had been proposed for all parties to reconvene and attempt to reach an agreement. Although the meeting was initially scheduled for this week, it has since been postponed to the 29th of the month, following repeated delays by the administrators. SLa remarked that this was surprising, as the administrators had previously expressed a desire to re-establish open communication.

PF and RS confirmed that no new date had yet been issued for the next meeting.
YC enquired about who had initiated contact and was advised that SYC had not done so. It was agreed that SYC should refrain from initiating further contact at this stage. .

YC raised a further question regarding the accounting for the project, noting that the building project has been ongoing for four to five years and remains incomplete.

GW confirmed that all contractual obligations with Stirlands have been fulfilled.
YC sought clarification on whether a Profit and Loss statement relating to the construction of the new clubhouse would appear in the club's accounts. It was confirmed that it would not be included in the main report.

It was noted that the clubhouse project was managed by a dedicated project group, which reported to the Board of Directors during the construction phase. DL expressed surprise that no project file or documentation was readily available for upload to Microsoft Teams to ensure transparency.

RS stated that background discussions would take place with those previously involved in the project's delivery to better understand how the financial aspects were managed and recorded. RS agreed to conduct background research but indicated they would not engage in discussion regarding the appropriateness of how funds were spent.

8. Bar/Stows Working Party Presentation

PF presented his report to the Board.

YC followed up on DL's earlier comment regarding weekend external events, suggesting that the club should encourage members to host their own events on weekends to increase internal engagement and utilisation of the clubhouse.

YC proposed developing event packages specifically for members and emphasised the importance of promoting the club as a venue for social gatherings. GW agreed with YC's suggestion and proposed offering discounted room hire rates for members' events.

YC suggested that the ethos across the Club should be that if a member is hosting a party, other members should feel welcome to join, fostering a sense of community.

PF noted that SYCOPS staff are working to become more familiar with members.

DL reflected that, in the old clubhouse, events such as the "Reggae Night" had generated significant amounts in bar revenue and suggested that similar events during the summer months could provide a significant boost to bar income.

EP supported the points raised by YC and GW, particularly with reference to Option 2 of the proposal, which includes a differentiated pricing structure for members.

With regard to Option 3, EP proposed reintroducing a sense of community by identifying volunteer roles that members may be willing to undertake noting the club's past spirit of volunteering. YC suggested that volunteers could help operate the bar or lounge on closed days, such as Mondays or Tuesdays, to provide tea and coffee service to members.

DS questioned why bar operations and Stows were being discussed at Board level. SLa clarified that the discussion was not about operational detail but rather about establishing what we believe the members want from the bar and restaurant in terms of purpose, direction, and contribution to the club, both financially and socially, before communicating that vision to members.

9. **Any Other Business**

MOS reminded the Board that, during last year's AGM, a request had been made to consider Leo Galldine for honorary membership and expressed the hope to begin that process. RS enquired whether Leo's boat had successfully crossed the Atlantic. MOS confirmed that it had not, noting that the vessel is currently in the United States. RS stated that if the Atlantic crossing were to be completed under Leo's stewardship, it would make the case for honorary membership being appropriate at that time. It was also noted that that if any members have additional proposals for honorary membership, they should notify the office by October.

Meeting closed at 21:04 pm

Date of Following Meetings –

Monday 20th October 1900h
Apologies - SLa

Approved by: RS, Commodore
Signed: ____________________