

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Executive Decision Record

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Countryside and Regulatory Services
Date:	11 March 2024
Title:	Basingstoke Canal
Report From:	Director of Universal Services

Contact name: Jo Heath

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1. The decision:

- 1.1. That the Executive Member for Countryside and Regulatory Services approves changes to the governance and operation of the Basingstoke Canal Authority (BCA) as detailed within the supporting report.
- 1.2. That the Executive Member for Countryside and Regulatory Services delegates authority to the Director of Universal Services in consultation with the Head of Legal Services to agree and enter into the necessary Memorandums of Understanding, Agreements and arrangements with partners, that will underpin the updated governance.
- 1.3. That the Executive Member for Countryside and Regulatory Services takes this decision in the context of Hampshire County Council's role as one of two landowning authorities for the Basingstoke Canal (alongside Surrey County Council), on behalf of whom the BCA acts as a delivery agent.
- 1.4. That, subject to a parallel decision by the Executive Member at Surrey County Council (to be taken on 26 March), these changes come into effect from 1 April 2024.

2. Reasons for the decision:

- 2.1. The current model for managing the Canal is not financially sustainable, requiring an annual draw on its reserves (which are projected to be fully depleted by 2026/27). This situation is compounded by the inadequacy of current governance arrangements, which do not offer sufficient clarity on working arrangements between partners.
- 2.2. Hampshire and Surrey County Councils are seeking for the Canal to move towards greater financial sustainability, while continuing to deliver on statutory obligations in relation to safety, conservation and wellbeing.
- 2.3. The decision is taken in support of those objectives.

3. Other options considered and rejected:

- 3.1. A number of future delivery models for the future of the Canal were considered as part of detailed analysis undertaken prior to this decision.
- 3.2. These options included 'do nothing', Change Ownership, Change Management Model, and deliver Statutory functions only. The other options considered were all found to be less financially viable, in the context of otherwise ensuring that statutory functions are delivered on an ongoing basis.

4. Conflicts of interest:

- 4.1. Conflicts of interest declared by the decision-maker:
- 4.2. Conflicts of interest declared by other Executive Members consulted:

5. Dispensation granted by the Conduct Advisory Panel: none.

6. Reason(s) for the matter being dealt with if urgent: not applicable.

7. Statement from the Decision Maker:

I thank the Universal Services Select Committee for pre-scrutinising the proposals and its support for the recommendations.

Approved by:

Date:

11 March 2024

**Executive Member for Countryside and Regulatory Services
Councillor Russell Oppenheimer**