**Manchester Water Safety Partnership**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 8th January 2020 – 11.00am**

Venue: Boardroom, Churchgate House

Present: David Wilson (Chair) – GMFRS

Justin Mundin – MCC

Lesley Allen - GMFRS

Adrian Brocklehurst – MCC

Oliver Collins – attending on behalf of Deputy Mayor

Adrian Hopkins -MCC

Fraser Swift – MCC

Mike Smith – GMP

Chris Hil – GMP

Tony Mitchell -

Nick Pope

Kellie Gillespie – GMFRS/Gmca

Mark Ferris – CRT

Helen Hall - CRT

Natalie Pace -

Oliver Collins - GMCA

Chris Wareing – Bridgewater Canal Company

Peter Parkinson – Bridgewater Canal Company

Gareth Worthington – Cityco

Steve – Late Arrival

Alex King - Cityco

Karen Wetton – note taker

Apologies: Peter Parkinson

Jeanette Staley

1. Welcome

Welcome and introductions were made.

1. Confirmation of previous minutes prior to publishing on the website

The minutes of the previous meeting on the 9th October 2019, were agreed as correct. Actions from these minutes were discussed and updates were given as follows:

1. Lock 89 (Rochdale Canal) ).

**Action:** Previous action was for Justin Mundin liaise with Ben (GMP Licencing) regarding recent incidents to see if anything can be done to reduce the risks including extending the barriers at the bottom of Rain Bar steps, ben advised he was not aware of this but will liase with Rain Bar and request a visit to assess if barrier/rails are efficient – to request an assessment at Rain Bar and make a decision if it is sufficient.

DW advised that he has had request for Jeanette Staley - Community Safety Rep from Salford City Council to attend the meetings, would like to ask if there are any objections for her to be formerly accepted to join the partnership – there were no objections from the group.

**Action**: DW Invite Jeanette Staley - Community Safety Reps from Salford City Council to join the group and invite to future meetings. **DW to check contact details are on the calendar invite.**

Action: For Salford Council, Cityco and Manchester Council H & S Dept. to come up with a plan of rescue equipment required for areas of concern – Adrian Brockley met with colleagues from Spinningfields ref concerns about attempted suicides from footbridges or bridges. People have jumped from both sides of the canal. Grab Chain on one side of canal, Manchester Canal side is high, grab chain on Manchester side but not on Salford side they have throw rings, not appropriate to put grab chains on Salford side. Allocated some time to look at lighting on Salford side as it poorly lit but this has not yet been progressed. A lighting survey has not yet been carried out there is talk of doing one but no funding available, currently an outsourced service at the minute. Water safety on Salford side has taken a back seat at the minute, very overgrown and cannot see how you can put in rescue equipment. After discussion with Suicide prevention officers it is not deemed appropriate to put up warning signs as it may draw attention to area. One instance on highway bridge recently as it is very easy to climb onto the bridge structure. One fatality in 2019 on bridge near Lowry Hotel, no public rescue equipment in this area, there have been early discussions about a life ring in this area could we have a life ring in this area.

Action for AB to speak to Ben Dolan to chase up life ring as detailed above

Action for DW to speak to Jeanette after the meeting

Action for All - Update against all recommendations – All partners need to send what they have completed against recommendations

Previous action for MW to contact Plumbline for costings –awaiting successor due maybe for July meeting ?

Action for Helen – To get a contact for innovative solutions

Minutes signed off

1. Review of Incidents

DW reported that there have only been 2 further Incidents since the last meeting in October are as follows:

Incident in 2019 – Person jumped off/over a wall near Minshull Street/top of village, person got himself out and GMFRS then rescued him with a ladder.

Incident in 2020 – called out to an instance at Lock keepers cottage, Lock 2, believed to be a homeless person possibly under the influence of drink or drugs. Person from nearby flats saw man collapse and fall in canal and he then got in to rescue him

A discussion then ensued around the area at Lock 2 being a possible meeting area for people to gather to take drugs/alcohol and could this area be made secure to stop people getting canal-side in this area. There is some funding available but as the locks are listed we may have to get advice from the heritage advisor. We need to find a solution which meets all objectives as current ideas will not work. This problem is not isolated to this area of the canal becomes more of a problem as you get nearer to city centre. Increase in rough sleepers is a concern in other areas. Also talk of a possible safe area could be made for drinking & drugs – this is unlikely as it would not be acceptable by the public and also has safe guarding issues etc.

DW suggested that we work with the clinics close by – Urban Village Medical Centre & also maybe Laura Stevenson from the homeless/rough sleeping team. Also to engage the community in the area as areas which attract visitors tend to be safer, dark canal stretches increase risks. Any action groups created in the Community may be able to fund throw-lines, public rescue equipment etc. Any new construction schemes within the area adjacent to water, work out effective consultation process where a consultee would become a water safety based partnership, in addition we would also consult Fire/Police/emergency services. Need to set up a link between planning dept and this group, who is the link? Planning department possible 2 -3 contacts in case someone is on leave. Need to put forward some names from this group. As funding is an issue maybe we can encourage developers to provide funds, good to get developers onside. Discussed Licensing act and expectations from venues in close proximity to water or at risk areas. New Policy due on January 2021it may be that we can build something into the policy. Should consider setting up a formal consultation group with new developers as this is probably something that is missing at the minute. Also discussions around bridges over River Irwell and ownership of bridges to see if they will fund rescue equipment for some of the areas. Overall the number of instances has decreased. Suicide preventaiton is a complex issue and the Suicide group may be looking at locations/safety. Is there a link between Suicide group & WSP group. DW to attend the next city centre Suicide group meeting to discuss water safety.

**DW – Action to give 3 names to Tony – DW / Alex/Adrian**

**Action for Adrian -** Liase with Urban Village medical centre & the Homeless team

**Action for Tony Mitchell** – attending a meeting later today with Neighbourhood team and will put this on their radar.

**Action For Tony Mitchell** – will explore if Section 106 contributions can be pooled and then earmarked for water safety measures throughout the city centre.

1. Update on Actions to meet RoSPA Recommendations

The actions were discussed and updates given:-

1. Commend the City for the development of Water Safety Partnership leaders and the City and the Combined Authority should define further executive reporting routes and political oversight of the Partnership work.

DW advised that this is now complete and stated that we now have a requirement to report to Manchester Community Safety Partnership & Mayors Office

.

1. Terms of Reference

DW has been sent out to all partners. All partners need to check and sign the Terms of Reference document and send back to him. Legal Team think they can make some small tweaks and changes to it. Small changes need to be done before sign off. Previously agreed in principle. All Deadline for changes needs to be finalised by Friday 17th Feb , all partners need to respond by the 10th  Feb. Then to be sent to Senior Leadership Team.

1. Improve the lighting along the length of the waterways in the City Centre, particularly along the canals.

DW read out the updates from the Rospa recommendations document.

Not much change since last Meeting. City Centre review has been completed, all repairs have been carried out, upgrading has been done , new lighting has been commissioned, there has been some general upgrading to Led Lighting at levels appropriate to the area. All lights are networked so any faulty lights will be repaired

the same day by contractors. Talking to Salford ref the River Irwell lighting area but survey here has not yet been done. Still trying to secure funding for this. Review of private sector has been done by MCC recommendations have been put in place and the work also completed.

This Action is now complete as detailed above - Through direct action and collaborative engagement with private owners during 2019, MCC will seek to establish a suitable and consistent system of waterway lighting in the city centre zone. Private owners have been contacted and they have agreed to upgrade their lighting.

1. To provide barriers where right angle entry point intersect to the towpath close to the waterway edge in locations where they are not already sited. All landowners should ensure they have a consistent approach to the implementation of barriers at interception points.

DW – all barriers in place as recommended by ROSPA. Temporary barriers in certain locations, council still being charged for them to be taken down each day. High cost for this service. Discussion on if these should remain in place or be taken down. Was a temporary solution but unclear if this has resulted in less incidents and we cannot measure what has been stopped. Access can still be gained in other areas. Also discussions around a talking box to replace these barriers. Considerations need to be can they be moved easily if put in the wrong location. Should we trial boxes and removal of barriers with recommendations from ROSPA. Also discussions around who will fund this.

Action - DW to speak to David Walker to get advice before removing barriers.

Action – Justin to look at costs for talking boxes and also check if there are records/reports of when barriers have been moved regularly.

Action - Mike to check with police officers if they have any reports of barriers being removed

1. Review the wayfinding and safety information that guides people towards the waterways and in particular dedicated crossing points.

AK sits on a working group regarding wayfinding, advised that no signage will be put on canals to say do not go on, they will direct people to go in best possible direction and finding way around the city centre for points of interest etc. Canals will not be advised or directed as a key route. AK shared maps etc with the group will reiterate concerns. All waterways are shown on the map.

1. Create a development standard policy for Manchester Control public safety alongside waterways**.**

No updates on this. Discussed earlier in meeting

1. Develop an action plan that enables the provision of rescue equipment - at scale across the city centre zone. It is envisaged that a community approach will be required to achieve this including private landowners, bar/leisure venues, and watersides, underpinned by key staff training.

DW advised 2 reach poles we have are still in place and have not been vandalised. Need further engagement between MCC/Lesley Allen/NWFC/Mark Ferris as regards additional rescue equipment.

Additional poles still required in other areas, Village have advised they will fund one at the top end of the village.

MF advised Poles cost approx. £1350 each plus fitting costs, need sign off and decisions on sites where they are to be placed. 2 suggested for Piccadilly Basin - One near Dakota and one on other side, 1 would be ok , 2 would be better. Site visit to Deansgate to decide best location for the pole and where it could be positioned on the Deansgate locks area.

DW maybe look at alternatives ie a box with a throw line if no room for pole. Would also need to map any additional rescue equipment and also have a maintenance procedure in place.

Action – DW to pass details MF for him to liase with Village Action group

Action – MF to liase with Village action group

1. The MWSP should consider further use of structured methods i.e., data completeness checklists to improve completeness and coverage of data captured.

This action is now complete.

1. Continue with and refine the behaviours/awareness programme relating to the use of the canal areas at night. Within this, students and younger males need to be a priority. Support should be sought from community groups and Universities to aid delivery.

DW advised

Don’t Drink & Drown Campaign – this winter had the biggest effect to date, HH updated group with stats - covered 2 visits to Deansgate locks, The Village, Manchester Pubs & Clubs network, Radio Manchester Hits radio, capital radio, Newcastle north east media, BBC news, North-west tonight, Manchester evening news. HH will also provide updates on social media 15000 views on Facebook and twitter, 24,000 reach on twitter was over 26,000. This video was one of our most viewed that we have ever done. Student Safety with Mayor & Sacha Lord about general safety but managed to get some water safety into it. Thanks to all involved including Princes Trust, Village Angels, Nick Pope

Action – DW to send Don’t drink & Drown video to the group

1. The Role of Licensing should be explored to enhance the safety of night visitors; in particular training and awareness for door staff, including the use of rescue equipment, awareness training to help improve identification of vulnerable adults, particularly lone males, and provision of publicly accessible rescue equipment at bar/venues within a set distance.

The MWSP has conducted an assessment of the provision of rescue equipment across the whole of the City Centre area and created a map identifying the location of all equipment, which has been posted on the MWSP website.

Discussed earlier

FS - Multi-agency meeting due tomorrow 9.1.20, recommendations of engaging with Door staff & GMP, looking at how we can factor this into meetings.

DW -

1. Within existing plans for severe weather events, particularly flooding; MCC should prioritise contact with those rough sleeping along the waterways.

DW – Link in around rough sleeping as discussed earlier

1. Future Events and Requests of Comms Group

DW said we needed a calendar of events and asked what we need moving forward. DW asked for input as what we want the Comms Group to do and to feed this back to himself or HH.

HH catch up meeting after this to plan this year’s campaigns – heading into Cold weather focus on winter safety. Claire working with a fire crew to make 2 videos on how to self-rescue if going into water to rescue a pet or fall in water. Charlies anniversary – discuss what we can do for that – possibly repeat of last year. Don’t drink & drown in June and Sept. Try to set up a meeting with Lad Bible as they are based in Manchester.

DW – Village Angels will wear the don’t drink & drown t shirts several times this year to promote Don’t drink & drown and we also need to continue to work with Universities. Ben Coombes keen to run 4 events throughout the year

KG – National Campaign of drowning due in April tie in with Manchester City centre should we tie in with this national campaign. Focus on city centre in this week.

DW – aim at reducing our carbon Footprint so would be good to try to do one of our meetings by Skype, will aid members of the group and be more time efficient. Will try to look at this as an option moving forward and may trial for meeting in July.

1. Innovative solutions to water incidents

Not discussed on this occasion

1. AOB

NP – Conscious we mention Heritage Approvals in our meetings but they have no representation at this meeting – can we look to get someone to attend the meeting ?

Would like to pass thanks to the group and DW for the outstanding presentation as a result people are now looking at the Manchester Water safety group for Best Practice and advice. Credit to all involved.

Next meeting 8/07/2020, Churchgate House