

- (c) Council considered the following motion by Councillor Coleman, seconded by Councillor Binnie, that:-

The Council expresses its concern that Scottish Canals are closing bridges because repairs are needed which they say they cannot afford, and reducing operating times, and so gradually closing the Lowland Canals. The Council also expresses concern at the loss of the purpose of the Millennium Link restoration - which was to bring the canals back to life from City to City and Sea to Sea.

The Council notes that Scottish Canal's total grant and earned income has been rising, but the amount being spent on maintaining the canals has fallen, and is concerned that once boats stop moving through the canal, it will once again be full of weed and become a festering eyesore to the detriment of the many new housing and commercial developments that have been attracted to its banks.

The Council supports the campaign by canal based voluntary groups to keep the canals alive and asks all those who funded the Millennium Link, including this Council and the Scottish Government, to urge the Board of Scottish Canals to meet their statutory obligations to keep the canals maintained and open for use.

As an amendment, Councillor Black, seconded by Councillor Blackwood, moved that:-

Council values the work of volunteers and organisations all along our canal waterway. We appreciate the work that is ongoing to regenerate and promote businesses in that area.

Council thanks Scottish Canals for the long way it has come in 6 years to establish and grow its business profile within difficult financial constraints alongside an asset base that requires a lot of maintenance work.

Council asks the Scottish Government to look at the core funding given to Scottish Canals and adjusts accordingly, so that those bridges can be effectively repaired and the canal network can be fully utilised by boats again. In addition funding is required to put in a drop lock at Bonnybridge and other areas of concern, so that communities are not inconvenienced, as they can be at times.

In terms of Standing Order 22.1, the vote was taken by roll call, there being 30 members present with voting as undernoted:-

For the motion (13) – Depute Provost Ritchie; and Councillors Alexander, Balfour, Binnie, Bouse, Coleman, Collie, Garner, Hughes, McCue, Meiklejohn, Murtagh and Spears.

Against the amendment (17) – Provost Buchanan; and Councillors Aitchison, Bissett, Black, Blackwood, Coombes, Flynn, Goldie, Grant, Harris, Kerr, McLuckie, Munro, Nicol, Nimmo, Patrick and Reid.

Decision

Council agreed the amendment.