



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LITTLEHAMPTON HARBOUR BOARD HELD AT THE
ARUN YACHT CLUB RIVERSIDE WEST, LITTLEHAMPTON ON
MONDAY 26TH JANUARY 2015 AT 10AM**

Present: Councillor N Peters (Chairman)
Mr P Bush (Vice Chairman)
Councillor I Buckland
Councillor R Elkins
Councillor J Mockridge
Councillor A Squires
Councillor Dr J Walsh
Councillor D Wensley*
Mr T Shenton (Commercial Users Representative)
Mr R O'Callaghan

In Attendance: Ms N Jones (Clerk to the Board)
Mr C Braby (Treasurer to the Board)
Mr B Johnson (Harbour Master)
Mrs J Harris (Notes Secretary)

615. WELCOME AND NOTICES

615.1 The Chairman opened the meeting and announced that the Environment Agency had nominated Mr Richard O'Callaghan for appointment to the Board. He went on to welcome Mr O'Callaghan to the meeting and invited him to make his declaration of office.

615.2 Mr Richard O'Callaghan read and duly signed his declaration of acceptance of office.

616. MOBILE PHONES

616.1 Members and the public were reminded that the use of mobile phones (other than on silent) was prohibited at Harbour Board and Sub-Committee meetings.

617. APOLOGIES

617.1 There were none.

618. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

618.1 Councillor Squires declared a personal interest as a District Councillor in matters on the agenda relating to Arun District Council. Councillor Mockridge declared a personal interest as West Sussex County Council's Deputy Cabinet Member for Finance in agenda item 18, agreement of funding for a multi-purpose vessel.

619. MINUTES

619.1 Regarding the West Bank, Councillor Buckland invited Members to join him and inspect the impact of the scouring out resulting from the flood defence works on the East Bank when the Board meeting finished.



619.2 Regarding Minute 608.5, debris in the river, Councillor Buckland stated that he had investigated the volume of incidences reported both formally at Board meetings and through other channels. In view of the potential impact on the safety of navigation of the river, he felt Members needed to be better informed in this respect and sought a more robust form of reporting to the Board.

619.3 In response the Harbour Master stated that Staff dealt with the removal of debris from the river as part of their daily responsibilities and it was not therefore practical to record every instance. Whilst it had been reported that some of the debris emanated from the West Works, he denied that this was a significant health and safety issue and reminded the meeting that work to repair this part of the Harbour Board's infrastructure would be undertaken as soon as resources were available. It was noted that the Infrastructure Project Development Group had been established by the Board to plan and oversee the repair and maintenance of the Harbour Board's infrastructure and that major issues would be examined in that forum and notified to the Board through regular reporting from that Group.

619.4 It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Minutes of the meeting held on 1st December 2014 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

620. HARBOUR OPERATIONAL REPORT

The Harbour Master presented a report (previously circulated) which detailed the operational activities undertaken in the harbour since the last meeting. In addition the Harbour Master updated the Board on the following matters:

620.1 Commercial Trade

The Harbour Master reported that although the total number of visits by commercial shipping was below budget expectations, he was confident that the budgeted tonnages would be achieved by the end of the current financial year.

620.2 Conservancy Duty

The Harbour Master reported that a further survey of the Bar had been completed on 23rd January and that the depths were good. It was also noted that further dates for maintenance dredging between now and April were being arranged.

620.3 Consents and Consultations

The Board noted that a standard Local Notice had been issued at the beginning of the year reminding mariners of previously issued notices that remained in force as at 1st January 2015. In addition, the Harbour Master had responded to the Environment Agency consultation regarding their proposals for the Climping Sea Defences.

620.4 Safety

The Harbour Master reported that IT problems had delayed the rollout of the MarNIS system and that this should be in operation by the end of the week.



620.5 The Pier

It was reported that some of the pile cappings were rusty exposing the wooden piles to the elements. It was noted that the Pier itself was the responsibility of the District Council and that as such they would need to assess the situation. The Harbour Master agreed to pass on concerns.

620.6 East Bank

The introduction of new sheet piling in the area of the commercial wharf on the East Bank was preventing water from draining away and causing flooding on the wharf. This had caused problems for the Harbour Board's commercial tenants and the Board wished to ensure that measures were put in place to prevent a recurrence. Whilst it was understood that the Environment Agency would be installing a sluice to alleviate the current problem, a long term solution was not within the scope of the current flood defence project. The Harbour Master confirmed that he was taking this forward with the Environment Agency.

620.7 Harbour Dues

The total number of plaques issued by the end of the calendar year had risen slightly to 496. This was in line with previous years. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

The contents of the Harbour Operational Report be otherwise noted.

621. TREASURER'S REPORT

621.1 The Board had before it the income and expenditure statement and income analysis for the period to the end of November 2014 (previously circulated). The Treasurer stated that although production of the December figures had not been possible in the timeframe allowed for the publication of the board papers, they were now available. It was noted that the level of income was sustained by the ongoing safety boat contract. Although a welcome boost, staff costs and shortfalls in income from both moorings and commercial vessels remained a feature of the accounts. The Treasurer provided clarification regarding the nature of commercial income stated in the accounts and confirmed that this included shipping and rental income. As previously reported, it was anticipated that repairs to the West Works would be completed by the end of the financial year thus increasing costs further. In noting the up to date commercial shipping position, Members considered that this highlighted the importance of the stance that had been adopted by the Board to support the diversity of activities in the harbour and generate new income streams.

621.2 Regarding the financing of the multipurpose vessel, it was noted that West Sussex County Council had formally agreed to support the Harbour Board's request for assistance to secure the required funding from the Public Works Loan Board. The basis of the agreement would therefore be the subject of a further report that would be considered by the Board under Exempt Business. The Treasurer wished to record his thanks for the support and assistance of the County Council in this matter. The Board therefore **RESOLVED** that:

The Treasurer's Report be noted.



622. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2015/16

622.1 The Board received and considered a meeting schedule for 2015/16 (previously circulated). It was **RESOLVED** that:

The schedule of meetings for 2015/16 be approved.

623. STAKEHOLDER SAFETY GROUP

623.1 The Harbour Master presented a report which set out proposals for changes to the Harbour Safety Stakeholder Consultation Group (previously circulated). He explained that the Group had evolved and that it was now firmly established as a valuable stakeholder forum and an important part of the Safety Management System. It was therefore proposed that the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Group be amended to reflect its increasing role in the Harbour operations. This would mean an increase in the number of meetings held per year from 2 to 4.

623.2 The Board went on to consider a revised ToR (attached as appendix A to the report) which set out the purpose, meeting schedule and membership arrangements for the Group going forward. During the ensuing discussion Members reflected on the involvement of Board Members in the Group and whether the Chairmanship of the Group should be independent of the Board. In view of the role of the Group in terms of resolving operational issues and monitoring the safety of operations in the Harbour, it was considered appropriate that the Group be chaired by the Recreational Users Representative as a Member of the Board.

623.3 The availability of grant funds to support these types of stakeholder groups was also noted. Those Members present who had attended meetings of the Group agreed that this was an important and informative forum and it was suggested that once confirmed, the meeting dates be circulated to Members of the Board. The Clerk agreed to take this forward and it was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

The revised Terms of Reference for the Stakeholder Safety Group attached as appendix A to the report be adopted.

**Councillor Wensley joined the meeting at 10.45am.*

624. WRITTEN NOTICE OF PUBLIC QUESTIONS

624.1 The Clerk presented a report which proposed the introduction of written notice for questions from members of the public (previously circulated). She explained the change aimed to give Members and Officers the opportunity to respond fully to questions raised and ensure that as many individuals as possible were able to participate in this part of the meeting. This was in line with the practice adopted by principle authorities and it was therefore recommended that the Constitution relating to the conduct of this part of the meeting be amended as set out in appendix 1 attached to the report.

624.2 Members went on to debate the nature of the public question time session and the impact of the proposed change. The desire to ensure that the session remained focussed on the strategic business of the Board was understood and the value of written questions to raise for matters that required a detailed financial or technical response acknowledged. However, the consensus was that the introduction of a



blanket requirement to give written notice would restrict the ability of the public to raise issues with the Board. The Chairman emphasised that Members and Officers had always made themselves available to members of the public on Harbour matters. Overall there was no appetite among Members for the change and it was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

The recommendation introducing written notice for questions from members of the public be rejected.

625. MEMORIAL BENCH

625.1 The Clerk presented a report which detailed a request from the World Ship Society, South Coast Branch to place a memorial bench in the Harbour (previously circulated). The request had highlighted that Board lacked a policy for dealing with requests of this nature and it was proposed that the Board adopt a policy similar to that used by the District Council and that the request be assessed on this basis. She explained that the Society wished to commemorate a former member who had been born and raised in Littlehampton and worked as an auxiliary Coastguard in the area.

625.2 The Board noted that whilst there was no spare capacity for benches on Pier Road at present, space may become available once the public realm enhancements were completed. It was also understood that planning consent would be required. Members agreed that a policy was required that included maintenance, price and duration and that it should cover plaques as well as benches. The Board held the view adopting a policy similar to that used by the District Council was a sensible way forward and would provide consistency regarding decisions on this and future requests. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) A policy for memorial benches and plaques following that of Arun District Council in terms of maintenance, price and duration be adopted and that future requests be presented to the Board for consideration.**
- 2) The request from the World Ship Society South Coast Branch was approved.**

626. PILOTAGE AUTHORISATION

626.1 The Harbour Master presented a report which recommended that the Deputy Harbour Master Board be authorised as Pilot in the Port (previously circulated). He stated that the Deputy Harbour Master had completed all the required sections of his training programme and that following assessments successfully undertaken on board the MV BEN VARREY earlier in January, he was pleased to be able to make this recommendation to the Board.

626.2 The Board congratulated Mr Harrison on the successful completion of his training and **RESOLVED** that:

The Deputy Harbour Master, Mr Lee Harrison be authorised as Pilot for the Port of Littlehampton.



627. PUBLIC FORUM

- 627.1 Mr Gary Edwards stated that on four occasions in the last year he had reported instances of debris in the river and asked what enforcement powers the Board had and whether they were willing to do anything about this perceived problem.
- 627.2 In response, the Harbour Master stated that the Board had the power to pass on the costs of recovering debris within the Harbour. He refuted the suggestion that debris in the river originated from structures owned by the Board. Considering number of reports from river users and staff on the river the Harbour Master was satisfied that the amount of debris in the river did not represent a significant danger to navigation. He also outlined the actions being taken to reduce supply of debris, namely the removal of pontoons at Waterside (completed) and the approval of licences to install new steel piles and remove dilapidated timber structures.
- 627.3 Mr Edwards asked if the Harbour Master agreed that debris in the river was a danger especially to vessels travelling in the night.
- 627.4 In response, the Harbour Master stated that it was the responsibility of the crew to keep a look out. The Chairman emphasised the importance of users reporting sightings of debris in the river.
- 627.5 Mr Bill Chapman stated that in his opinion, the surge in the flow of the river had caused damage to some of the charter boats. He considered the current moorings untenable and asked if the Board was going to do anything about finding safer moorings for the charter boats.
- 627.6 In response, the Harbour Master stated that in his view, the moorings that had been made available to the charter vessels were safe and that the recent damage suffered to Mr Chapman's boat during a short notice and temporary stay on the Town Quay was the result of poor weather conditions. He also reminded owners that the moorings had been offered to the charter vessels free of charge.
- 627.8 Highlighting some typographical errors in Minute 608.10 of the previous meeting, Mr Boyce asked the Board to consider recording its proceedings.
- 627.9 The Chairman thanked Mr Boyce for his suggestion and for bringing the inaccuracies to the attention to the Board. With the benefit of this information the Board also **RESOLVED** that Minute 608.10 of the previous meeting be amended as follows:
"608.10 A recent ~~discharge of raw sewerage~~ surge in the river at Town Quay / Dukes Wharf had necessitated the moving of charter boats to Town Quay and a representative of P&O Pier Road Charter Boats asked that the charter boats be permanently moored there".
- 627.10 Mr Ivan Warren, RNLI representative on the Stakeholder Group, asked if the Yacht Club could be considered as a venue for future Stakeholder Group meetings.
- 627.11 Mr Bush agreed to take this suggestion forward.



- 627.12 Mrs Boyce asked the Board if they felt that the picture on the front page of the tide tables conveyed the right message about the port.
- 627.13 In response, the Chairman stated that the Board would be happy to consider other images of the river for inclusion in future publications if members of the public wished to pass them on.
- 627.14 Regarding the recent damage to vessels as a result of the surge in the river, Mrs Boyce asked the Board to support river users in their negotiations with the Environment Agency to find a resolution for stakeholders.
- 627.15 In response, the Chairman stated that the comments made by stakeholders during the meeting had been noted and that the Board would continue to work in partnership with the Environment Agency.
- 627.16 As a landowner on the West Bank and in view of the future plans for the area, Mr James Baird asked to join the Stakeholder Group.
- 627.17 It was agreed that the Harbour Master would take this request forward.
- 627.18 Mr Smithers asked for information regarding the recent increase in the flow of the river and asked how many cubic meters of water had been lost in the river since the construction of the flood defences and what could be done about the surge.
- 627.19 It was agreed that Mr O'Callaghan, the Environment Agency Representative, would take this question forward.

628. EXEMPT BUSINESS

In a motion proposed by Cllr Dr Walsh and seconded by Cllr Elkins it was **RESOLVED** that:

Due to the confidential nature of the following items to be considered, that the public and accredited representatives of the press and other media be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of business of personal information relating to an individual, the business of third parties and/or legal proceedings.

**SUMMARY OF MATTERS DISCUSSED IN THE
EXEMPT PART OF THE AGENDA**

629. EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1ST DECEMBER 2014

- 629.1 The Board received the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 1st December 2014 (previously circulated to Members of the Board only) and it was **RESOLVED** that:

The Exempt Minutes be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

630. RENEWAL OF LEASE FOR THE BOARDROOM AT PIER ROAD

The Board received a report from the Clerk which set out proposals to renew the existing lease of the former Boardroom and one parking space at the Pier Road office (previously circulated to Members of the Board only). On the basis that the



current tenant was both reliable and helpful, it was recommended that their lease be renewed.

630.2 It was **RESOLVED** that:

Officers be authorised to make the necessary arrangements for the Harbour Board to extend or enter into a new lease with the existing tenants for a further two years.

631. AGREEMENT FOR FUNDING FOR MULTI-PURPOSE VESSEL

631.1 The Clerk tabled a report which set out the terms proposed by the County Council for borrowing the funds for the purchase of the multi-purpose vessel (circulated to Members of the Board only). The Board **RESOLVED** that:

The terms of the borrowing as set out in the report be authorised and that the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Officers be authorised to execute the necessary documentation.

The meeting closed at 11.40am.