

# **REPORT OF FULL MEETING OF WELLS HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS (WHC) HELD AT THE HARBOUR OFFICE ON 29<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 6:30PM**

**PRESENT:** Andy Frary (AF) –Chair, Chris Thomson (CT), Mel Catton (MC), Alan Bushell (AB), Brian Riches (BR), Avril Lill (AL), Nick Groom (NG), Bob Ellis (BE), Kevin Theobald (KT)

**EXECUTIVE MEMBERS:** Robert Smith (Harbour Master), Louise De Lisle (Harbour Administrator)

## **1) NEW COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENT & OATH**

- The new prospective commissioner Kevin Theobald was welcomed to the meeting.
- Kevin Theobald read the oath and duly signed

The meeting was officially opened with the new Commissioner.

## **2) APOLOGIES:** Denys Hickey (DH)

## **3) MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

- Minutes of the last full meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> September 2018 and the special meeting of the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018 were agreed and signed as a true record of those meetings.

## **4) CHAIRMAN – Andy Frary**

- **Correspondence:**
  - Nothing to report

## **5) FINANCIAL UPDATE – Louise De Lisle**

- The 2018 yearend accounts have been completed for Larking Gowen to review. There will be adjustments made (mainly taxation and accounting fees) which are provided at a later date. A meeting with the accountants has been set up for 19<sup>th</sup> March 11:00 where the final accounts will be presented and questions can be asked.
- Preliminary results for the year had been previously circulated and were presented at the meeting.
- Year ending 2018, there were 335 visiting boats compared to 304 in 2017 for the same period.
- The Port brochure has been published and is now available at the Harbour Office and on the website.

## **6) HARBOUR MASTER'S REPORT - Robert Smith**

- The Shell GTL diesel is now being supplied at the Outer Harbour to the wind farm vessels. The fishing bowser is being supplied with the old diesel. The new diesel is a higher price. The fisherman and other users will continue to be supplied with the old diesel until such point that the new diesel proves itself in terms of performance.
- The planning application for the glass panels on the perimeter wall of the Harbour Office has finally been granted. Installation will take place in May. The wall at the back of the office was removed from the application and will need a separate planning application in the future.
- Royal Haskoning are coming for a site visit to look at the feasibility for the managed realignment project at Slade Marsh on 5<sup>th</sup> March. All interested Commissioners are welcome to attend that site visit. Royal Haskoning will provide a report on whether the project could work. Climate change students from the University of East Anglia visited the site as a field trip as part of their course and the lecturers are very keen to be involved and offer advice.
- AF, RS, LDL, Tony Ford (representing the Town Council) and Mark Frary (representing the fishermen), met with the entrepreneurs looking to establish a seaweed farm off the North Norfolk Coast. Up to 80 jobs could be created. The fishermen have concerns over losing fishing ground and there are also navigational concerns that would need to be sorted out, however overall it was a positive meeting. The business is planned to be

established out at Egmere. MC confirmed that the Town Council are in favour. The Commissioners are happy to continue to support until such time as it proves unfeasible.

- RS has a meeting with Norman Lamb on 1<sup>st</sup> March. AF will also attend.
- There has been a break in at the fishermen's shed, the doors were smashed, nothing was taken. New doors have been made.
- A new rib has been purchased for the beach patrol. The old one is worth around £3500. The commissioners discussed whether to sell or donate to a local organisation that requires a rib. BE declared an interest but confirmed that the Sea Cadets are looking for a rib as a safety boat. The Commissioners agreed to offer the rib free of charge to the Sea Cadets.
- RS explained the incident regarding the drowning that had taken place from the pontoons. Five members of the harbour staff had participated in the search. The funeral will take place on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 11:00 at St Nicholas Church. The harbour office will be closed to allow staff members to attend the remembrance service. CT enquired whether there had been an inquest concerning the lady that had died on her boat in the harbour. RS confirmed that there had been no inquest as her death had been natural causes. Her ashes will be scattered in the spring with harbour staff organising the trip on behalf of her daughter to scatter them in the harbour.
- The lifeboat horse sculpture appeal has gone extremely well with the public and nearly all of the £15000 has been raised. LDL suggested if more money comes in it could be used to pay the artist to carry out repair works. Three Wells businesses have contributed so far with the majority from the public.
- After meeting with the College of West Anglia and a school visit, the apprenticeship scheme is not workable for the Harbour. This scheme has therefore been scrapped for the foreseeable future.
- To date 1543 copies of "Crossing the Bar" books have been sold generating a profit to date of £7k. It was agreed that the Wells Harbour Maritime Trust has enough funds in the bank and therefore the Commissioners agreed to bring suggestions to the next meeting of local charities that could benefit from these proceeds.
- Concerns were raised over the kayak business that was trialled at the spit near the Lifeboat House in the summer which operated at high tide. Wind farm vessels, fishing boats and the Wells Ferry all had problems with inexperienced kayak users in the main channel. The Coastwatch had also expressed concerns on several occasions. The Commissioners agreed that the business should not be permitted to operate this season.  
**Action RS to contact operator.**
- Concerns were raised about the ski club members going too fast with swimmers in the area. RS stated only two boats are permitted on the course at any one time but the club had been active in the harbour for 30 years and each year they submit their course and safety plan. There has never been an incident to date. Another concern was raised over use of a ringo with children on when crossing wakes of boats as vessels behind cannot see the ring. **Action RS to speak to ski club about speed in vicinity of swimmers and use of ringos.**

## 7) Working Party/Commissioner Reports

### Vessels and Plant – Alan Bushell

- The *William -T* is being repaired under insurance and the engine noise is also being investigated at the same time.
- The Liebherr excavator onboard the *Kari Hege* had cracks in the stick arm. Liebherr had not been helpful when asked for advice and has submitted an invoice with high cost for photographing the cracks. This is being contested. Anvil Engineering carried out the repairs.
- The *Frank-T* was lifted onto blocks on the quay whilst the prop shafts were fitted. These had been damaged by crab lines. At the same time the hull was pressure washed. Blakeney Harbour Authority has asked to use the vessel to lift their fairway buoy. This will be carried out when the *Frank-T* is in the field to check on the wave buoy for the wind farm. The Commissioners agreed that the Port will lift the fairway buoy free of charge for Blakeney harbour.
- The *Tender-S* needs to be shot blast primed and repainted. It has proven difficult to find someone to carry out the work.

- There are no issues with any of the vehicles.
- The new hoist had some technical problems now sorted.
- The tractor could be replaced with a more modern one as it needs to be reliable when working out on the channel with an incoming tide. AB recommended this to be replaced. The existing tractor could be traded in. The Commissioners agreed for RS to make enquiries with a trade in and a budget of £20K.

**Channel and buoyage** – Brian Riches (nothing to report)

**Estates** - Chris Thomson (Nothing to report)

**Port Strategy** – Mel Catton

- The strategy document requires an update for 2019. **Action: All Commissioners to provide MC with input into the document.**
- MC reported that the ground under the Granary is looking rough and uneven on the Granary side and looks to be breaking away again. **Action: RS to look**
- MC reported that the roundabout at the end of Beach Road has been postponed until next year following a meeting that took place with concerned parties to access the Beach Road. This meeting was controversial as WTC, NNDC and Marie Strong from County Council had not been invited and WTC had paid money for the work to be done. The original plan put forward by WTC and the NNDC did not necessitate the closing of the roads. RS stated that he had spoken to the Highways department the day before the meeting and he had been assured by Highways that barriers would be opened up for vehicles to pass. MC raised concern that the delay of the project could prevent it from going ahead. RS stated he would write to Highways about the delay **Action RS.**
- MC stated that the car park signage is more than adequate and now lights have been put up on the main signs there can be no excuse for people not being aware of the car park regulations.
- Crabbing equipment for this season has gone into production; the manufacturers are no further forward with finding replacement to the monofilament line. The shops have agreed to phase out the small buckets. MC has introduced signs in his shop to ask people to dispose of the equipment responsibly. AL stated that Sue Riseborough would be interested in coming back as our Gilly Warden which would be welcomed.

**Health and Safety** – Bob Ellis

- The 2018 checks have all been carried out except for running moorings at the East End, however there is a note on the wall for these to be done. There have been no accidents.

**Harbour services** – Nick Groom (nothing to report)

**Website Update** – Avril Lill

- AL and LDL are looking into upgrading the WHC website.

**8) Any Other Business**

- AF requested a date for the next Harbour Users Meeting. **Action LDL to sort a date.**

**9) Staff Matters**

- Confidential staff matters were discussed.

**Meeting closed 21:00 pm**

Approved .....

**Chairman Andy Frary**

**Date**