

**MINUTES OF FULL MEETING OF WELLS HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS (WHC)  
HELD AT THE HAROUR OFFICE/ VIA TELECONFERENCE ON**

**28<sup>th</sup> JULY 2020 AT 6:30PM**

**PRESENT:** Andy Frary (AF) – Chair, Ashely Mullenger (AM), Brian Riches (BR), Mel Catton (MC), Avril Lill (AL), Kevin Theobald (KT), Denys Hickey (DH), Josh Danziger (JD), Nick Groom (NG)

**EXECUTIVE MEMBERS:** Robert Smith (RS) Harbour Master, Simon Cooper (SAC) Harbour Administrator

**1. CHAIRMAN WELCOME**

AF welcomed all to the meeting and thanked them for dialling in.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Chris Thomson (CT), Bob Ellis (BE)

**3. APPROVE MINUTES**

The Commissioners confirmed that they were happy for AF to sign the minutes from the last meeting.

**4. HARBOUR UPDATE ON MATTERS ARISING**

SAC then went on to run through the written update that formed part of the agenda item 4 adding;

The Trinity House inspection was tomorrow (Wednesday) rather than today.

The illustrations of the Pier and Tide Gauge land were circulated. RS pointed out these were purely ideas and that we are now costing them to give us an idea of how much they would be should there be a wish to seriously pursue at a later date. JD questioned the purpose to which RS responded it was nothing specific but would assist those launched vessels as a temporary station and another area for people to enjoy the harbour from.

RS highlighted that given our governance does not make it easy to extend the term of the Commissioners service for a further year, the idea should probably be dropped which would mean the recruitment of commissioners for next year and a replacement chairman as AF is due to stand down. AF asked all the commissioners to give some thought as to who potentially might stand and to feedback to RS/SAC as all see fit so as the process can start to be developed.

RS also asked the commissioners to consider that for the September meeting we look at venues to try and hold a 'socially distance approved' face to face meeting and to let RS/SAC know if they are comfortable to do that or otherwise. RS emphasised that we are not under any pressure to do so but given the length of time since we had all met and assuming that circumstances have improved by then it might be feasible. NG pointed out that we don't have to make a decision just yet but perhaps we review in, say, 6 weeks time.

RS advised WHC that we had started to look at installing CCTV around all of the Harbour areas as whilst we have not had major problems with thefts etc, it would be a deterrent and with technology as it is, the costs are not looking prohibitive. Having obtained some advice we can procure what would be very effective coverage all around the quay/ moorings. RS/SAC will continue to refine the idea and revert at a later date when there is a firm proposal. All concurred that this would be welcome by all harbour users.

RS had received an enquiry regarding the restoration of a Thames Barge that had sailed into Wells on a few occasions. RS had advised them that in principle WHC would be supportive and once they have firmer ideas of what they intend to do RS would present to WHC to gain formal support.

The Baden Powell, usually moored in KL will be visiting Wells in August for a few weeks whilst works are being undertaken in Kings Lynn. RS advised that they were here last year so it is a vessel known to the Harbour.

SAC then presented the financial update for end of June. The results naturally continue to show a decline in performance vs last year although the position remains stable. Costs continue to be controlled and RS reminded the WHC that big capital projects remain on hold.

SAC then presented the Private & Confidential paper on looking at the Impact assessment on the various revenue and costs of the WHC which was discussed and noted accordingly.

## **5. COMMISSIONERS UPDATE**

Updates / comments were received from the commissioners as follows;

JD had been looking closely at the flood issues that impact the town and the surrounding areas and raised some possible further ideas which could be explored that may compliment the study undertaken by Royal Haskoning. WHC are also though awaiting further information from Holkham who are undertaking some investigative work and we will be providing insight into that given the knowledge we have from the past events. SAC will raise with Peter Mitchell.

BR wanted to point out that the new channel entrance was much simpler to navigate and made it much more user friendly.

AM said she was keen to resurrect the Heritage trial idea but obviously at this time of year it is probably wiser to look at again in September.

MC wanted to thank on behalf of the Commissioners the continuing good job the team are doing in what are still testing times. MC then also advised WHC that Christmas Tide was cancelled having undergone a thorough analysis it was still felt to be unfeasible to manage the event safely enough. They are still looking to erect a tree and requested WHC to consider sponsoring it as is done each year. All the WHC members agreed that the tree should be sponsored again.

AF reiterated the point that as we enter into the replacement process for the Chairman, it is critical we ensure the candidate is knowledgeable about our history and how the harbour has progressed/developed, is local so as to understand the wider implications of decisions made and has naturally an interest on seeing the WHC support the community.

AM queried if a sign should be put on the diesel pontoon as there have been a few occasions members of the public have used it. SAC agreed as he has also had to move people off. SAC advised the WHC that a sign similar to that used at the Frank T steps was being organised.

**6. WHMT**

The AGM for the WHMT was held last Thursday.

**7. AOB**

No further

**8. Staff Matters**

There was no additional update to the comments on matters earlier.

Meeting was then closed @ 19.30

Approved.....

Andy Frary

Date.....