

MINUTES OF FULL MEETING OF WELLS HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS (WHC)

HARBOUR OFFICE

31st May 2022 AT 6:30PM

PRESENT: Mel Catton (MC) – Chair, Bob Ellis (BE), Sally Wynne (SW), Chris Thomson (CT), Josh Danziger (JD)

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

1. CHAIRMAN WELCOME

MC thanked all for attending and had nothing to add at this point.

2. APOLOGIES

Nick Groom (NG), Kevin Theobald (KT), Ashley Mullenger (AM), Andy McCallum (AMc), Brian Riches (BR), Denys Hickey (DH)

3. FINANCIALS

SAC reported that the accounts year to date are relatively healthy considering we are on par with last year despite falls in diesel revenue etc following the Windfarm vessels leaving. SAC reminded the Commissioners that the accounts still reflect some SCIRA contribution as the notice period continues and the settlement agreement is not yet formalised which gives a slightly skewed picture of the financials ytd.

The figures also show good improvements in car park income, berthing fees and visitor numbers relative to 2019 - the last comparable financials that were not impacted by the pandemic.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

The Commissioners confirmed that they were happy for MC to sign the minutes from the last meeting as well as confirming the AGM minutes as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

The Commissioners all agreed that whilst turn out at the AGM was rather low, there was good debate and interaction with those present.

5. HARBOUR EXECUTIVE UPDATE

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

1. Car Park – Whilst the planning application remained outstanding a letter from highways has now been sent to NNDC planning and now in support of the proposal. SAC therefore expects approval to be received any moment. In the meantime, SAC had written to planning and highways informing them that given the delays experienced, the WHC were pressing ahead with groundworks etc and should they have any objection that they needed to contact us asap. No response was received from either party. SAC therefore has instructed the contractors who will be on site by the end of the month. Also, it is to be noted that the current car park company will cease operations also by month end.
2. Albatros – A meeting was held with the owner and the draft license agreement was discussed. Ultimately at that meeting it was agreed that the draft was substantially accepted albeit the owner had not found a solution to an odourless pump out which he advised he would go and investigate further. There is still uncertainty about the vessels return date.

3. Heritage Harbour – RS advised that as per an email circulated a couple of weeks back, the HH committee had supported the application.
4. 360 years anniversary – A couple of meetings had been held with Karen Jones – the project manager volunteer. She is producing a paper at which point the 360th anniversary sub group should meet again to discuss next steps.
7. Ardwinia Barge – As previously advised by RS, the Ardwinia barge idea fell through.
8. Triathlon – The triathlon is fast approaching and calls for marshals to volunteer has been circulated/ followed up on. So far, there have been good response levels to assist.
9. Outer Harbour pontoons – RS informed the WHC that delivery and installation of the 3 finger pontoons has occurred and initial observations show them to work well. There is also plenty of demand/ interest being seen by several boat owners already in the harbour which suggests demand is there to install more, so an additional order of 7 more fingers will be made and rather than renting these pontoons, we will go ahead and purchase instead.

6. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

JD updated the WHC that the Royal Haskoning report for Burnham Overy Staithe was complete and is publicly available. Essentially the outcome has revealed 3 important matters, namely;

1. The government authorities still predict that the storm surge in 2013 was a 1 in 800 year event although this work reveals that the likelihood of similar events occurring need to be better understood by the authorities.
2. Any surge slightly bigger than 2013 and there is likely impact far more inland and thus potentially impacting Burnham Market/ Town and Thorpe.
3. A pressure release valve would have an effect at Burnham Overy Staithe to Burnham Norton/Overy and could play a role in mitigating surges and thus reducing the flooding.

CT advised that he continues to represent the WHC at the RNLI water safety group. A recent warning poster/ announcement has been published in an attempt to raise awareness of people still getting cut off on Holkham beach.

No other Commissioners had updates or further comments.

7. AOB

MC highlighted that he had understood there to be comments surrounding the little blue hut doing more than booking tours and selling merchandise. SAC advised that Liam Pink, who has taken it on, is hiring out gilly equipment, selling bait, water, sunscreen and also helping the lobster hatchery with booking tours and selling the stickers and bags.

8. Staff Matters

None

Meeting was then closed @ 19.50

Approved.....

Mel Catton

Date.....