

MINUTES OF FULL MEETING OF WELLS HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS (WHC)

HARBOUR OFFICE

27th September 2022 AT 6:30PM

PRESENT: Mel Catton (MC) – Chair, Bob Ellis (BE), Sally Wynne (SW), Chris Thomson (CT), Nick Groom (NG), Kevin Theobald (KT), Ashley Mullenger (AM), Brian Riches (BR), Denys Hickey (DH)

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

Josh Danziger (JD), Andy McCallum (AMc)

3. 360th Anniversary presentation – deferred until later in the meeting.

4. FINANCIALS

The Commissioners were asked to note and recognise that with the fall in income streams (as expected) overall this year, we would be loss making and as per previous agreements we expect that our losses are likely to be similar to the profits made last year and that overall we will continue to expect the losses will be equivalent to the previous years gain. As time moves on WHC will have to continue to adapt the financials with a combination of increasing revenue – most likely via new opportunities and an increase in tariffs as well as continue to look for synergies/ cost savings.

That said, certain revenue streams continue to show good improvements such as car park income, berthing fees and visitor numbers.

5. APPROVE MINUTES

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

6. HARBOUR EXECUTIVE UPDATE

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

1. Windfarm – SAC confirmed the SCIRA settlement agreement signed.
2. Car Park – SAC advised that planning consent had now been provided. Also, that contractors had started work on the islands which will hold the barrier machines and pay machines. Next week the system installation will occur and the following week training and software installation in the office will be made.
3. 360 years anniversary – A couple of meetings had been held with Karen Jones – the project manager volunteer. A presentation on the initial thoughts will be held later in the meeting.
4. Heritage Harbour – RS advised the Heritage Harbour Committee continue to have talks with Historic England (which is not directly linked with Wells application but the overall Heritage Harbour position). For ourselves it is more a question of when we shall decide to officially announce.
5. Outer Harbour pontoons – RS informed the WHC that delivery and installation of a further 3 finger pontoons is due anytime soon. Those installed have worked extremely well and all occupied.

6. Favor Parker Land – RS advised that a letter had been received from the resident's association implying that at the next board meeting it is likely that they will agree to rectify the area in question albeit they still maintain that they do not believe their perceived belief the movement in the quay wall is anything to do with their land.
7. Fire Basket – A query was raised by email from an ex-Commissioner requesting assurances the fire basket would not become a 'white elephant' having not been lit at the platinum celebrations. The Commissioners had a discussion about its use, location and alternative way to light it and it was agreed/ endorsed the position was still deemed to be the best place for it, it would not become unused as at the very least it is lit for Christmas Tide amongst other occasions but SAC was asked to investigate possible alternative lighting options such as gas.
8. David Cox's land – An application to register the land had been made and a subsequent exchange held with the Land Registry. WHC did not object to the application but requested confirmation with the applicant to agree where the boundary was and that they needed to acknowledge their bench was actually on WHC land and needed to be removed. There then was a discussion between the Commissioners debating whether or not the benches could remain in place. It was agreed that providing the owners recognised the fact that it was WHC land and that by having their bench on the land, the Commissioners reserve the right to have the benches removed and that the owners accept they have no rights whatsoever to the land by any sort of adverse possession order. SAC was requested to engage lawyers to organise a letter be sent to the owners to this effect.
9. Lord Mayors Procession – RS advised that the organisers had offered for the Harbour Master, a Triathlon organiser and 2 Commissioners to attend the Lord Mayors show all expenses paid. Some of the Commissioners would be in attendance through other purpose/means but RS requested if anyone wanted to attend to contact himself in order to pass on details to the organisers.
10. Albatros – An update from the owner regarding the Albatros was circulated to the Commissioners. There is an expectation it might return this year but RS reminded the Commissioners that the license agreement still had to be signed as well as the other conditions met which are all still outstanding prior to its return being formally approved. The owner understands this and continues to provide assurances to this effect.

3. 360th Anniversary Presentation – Karen & Graham Jones was invited to present their slide deck on thoughts about how we can approach the 360 years anniversary celebrations next year. Karen advised that they would pull together a plan and description of how the whole topic can be managed for the Commissioners to opine on. There was then an agreement made for the floor plaque to be commissioned with Holkham Forge. The design of which had been circulated earlier but would be 'finessed' by the forge as required to make it suitable for placing on East Quay.

7. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

CT advised that he continues to represent the WHC at the RNLI water safety group. A recent spate of water quality warnings were issued by the Environment agency which has sparked debate between the EA, Holkham, RNLI and ourselves. A meeting is planned at the start of November which RS was unable to attend but it was agreed an alternate should go instead.

No other Commissioners had updates or further comments.

8. AOB

MC highlighted;

13th November – The Town council/ British legion have applied for road closures for the memorial service. MC requested if RS could make 10 or so barriers available to help with the closures .

Christmas Tide this year will be held on 26th November. Similar arraignments for this year as the last. The Trees are being delivered end of October. SAC advised that one of the holes would have to be moved as the new pay station for the car park will occupy the space, so the tree will now need to be on the other side of the exit where the Frank T parking is/was.

MC noticed that the wall at Tug Boat Yard had been repaired albeit not particularly well. No one seemed to know who did it so MC said he would look into it further.

MC suggested that it would be good to re-instate the Christmas dinner with the Commissioners – SAC took an action to start to investigate options.

MC read out a letter received from the Wells library, thanking for donating a copy of Robert's book.

9. Staff Matters

None

Meeting was then closed @ 20.30

Approved.....

Mel Catton

Date. 29/11/2022