

MINUTES OF FULL MEETING OF WELLS HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS (WHC)

HARBOUR OFFICE

29th November 2022 AT 6:30PM

PRESENT: Mel Catton (MC) – Chair, Bob Ellis (BE), Nick Groom (NG), Brian Riches (BR), Denys Hickey (DH), Josh Danziger (JD),

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

1. CHAIRMAN WELCOME

MC thanked all for attending.

Firstly, MC wanted to pass on his thanks to all that supported the Christmas Tide – there was an excellent turnout, very good feedback and this would not be possible without the efforts employed by all concerned.

Secondly, Brian, Chris and Kevin all stand down as Commissioners and MC, on behalf of WHC, wanted to formally record our thanks for their time supporting the harbour.

2. APOLOGIES

Andy McCallum (AMc), Sally Wynne (SW), Chris Thomson (CT), Kevin Theobald (KT), Ashley Mullenger (AM)

3. FINANCIALS

SAC reported that the accounts year to date were attached and taken as read. SAC reminded the WHC the impact on the SCIRA numbers and as such has again updated the numbers so a year on year comparison can be made. The situation remains the same in that the WHC recognises 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 to be the case. 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 – some of which, after a query on the matter from DH have been implemented.

The Commissioners then went on to discuss alternative revenue streams that could be looked at and RS/SAC agreed that as these ideas firm up they can be presented to the Commissioners. The most likely initial proposal RS advised was using the space to the left of the car park entrance, as you enter, which, with the new barrier system in place, provided an opportunity.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

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

5. YEARLY TARIFF REVIEW

SAC presented the 2 papers regarding the annual review of tariffs, firstly explaining the inflation figures for the year and reminding the Commissioners that in previous years the WHC used inflation as the main tool to decide if an increase in any tariff was appropriate. Given that this year, inflation is averaging at about 10%, the Commissioners debated what was deemed a sensible increase whilst ensuring it is seen as fair and doesn't deter people for having a boat in the harbour. After a lengthy debate it was agreed a 5% increase would be made apart from freezing visitor rates, Fisherman quay

berths and the weekly laying up charge which were all tariffs fully introduced and implemented last year. The proposal to increase the pontoon tariffs for the Commercial businesses was discussed and it was agreed to defer for a further year. SAC raised an anomaly with the pricing for Harbour Dues as at present all vessels pay a fixed rate for boats under 4.57m whereas berth holders with a fore/aft/swing mooring can have a tender for free providing it is smaller than 3.6m. SAC suggested that the boat lengths for each be aligned and it was agreed that we would lessen the flat rate on Harbour Dues for boats up to 3.6m from 4.57m. SAC advised the WHC that in the yearly invoicing a letter accompanies the invoice which will explain the increases made accordingly. WHC have also introduced a tariff for the Outer Harbour mid-year which the Commissioners ratified and agreed that the pricing structure for the new finger pontoons should be different given they have better access to sea and at present free water and electricity.

6. HARBOUR EXECUTIVE UPDATE

RS/SAC then provided the WHC with a verbal update as follows;

1. Car Park – The barrier system was installed and was up and running until the commencement of the resurfacing work which is nearly complete. Once done, temporary lines will be painted (whilst the concrete cures and the weather improves) with an aim to reopen the car park at the start of December.
2. 360 years anniversary – A follow up meeting will be held now the Lord Mayors show has occurred which was diverting the attention of key people, including Karen. RS advised that the port brochure next year will have an appropriate front cover design to celebrate this and the Heritage Harbour status.
3. Heritage Harbour – Announcing the success of being accredited still to be confirmed. An article for the port brochure will be included which can also be used for a wider general communication.
4. Outer Harbour pontoons – RS informed the WHC that delivery and installation of a further 4 finger pontoons is due anytime soon. Those installed have worked extremely well and all occupied.
5. Favor Parker Land – RS advised that he understood the Residents are going to repair their land however maintain the cause is the quay wall and not their doing.
6. Fire Basket – Following the last meeting, SAC advised that he contacted 2 companies to investigate an alternative, more reliable system to light the basket. Both companies confirmed there was precedent of other organisations switching to an LPG system however both were a little sceptical given our baskets location although said it wasn't 'impossible'. Standard installation was 'a few thousand' but given the location and speciality only 1 company informed they would be able to provide a solution but it would be costly. Given this information the Commissioners agreed that the cost vs reward was not considered to be achievable and so for now we would continue to use the basket as we currently do.
7. David Cox's land – The lawyers were instructed to write to all landowners to advise and seek acknowledgement of the boundaries/ ownership and that should they want or have a bench on the land owned by WHC, it would be permitted providing they accepted and recognised the WHC ownership and that it was at their risk.
8. Old lifeboat station ground – RS believes that upon demolition of the site, it seemed the foundations had also been removed which following a report completed by Royal Haskoning, was considered they remained in situ for the stability of the spit/ access channel to the Outer Harbour. RS suggested he wrote to Holkham/ NNDC to follow up should this turn out to be the case.

7. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

JD advised that BoS held its public meeting regarding the Flood consultation they had received. Over 100 people attended and thought to be a good turnout. JD offered that anyone who wanted to be debriefed to just contact him.

No other Commissioners had updates or further comments.

8. AOB

none

9. Staff Matters

None

Meeting was then closed @ 20.30

Approved.....

Mel Catton

Date.....29/1/23.....