

MINUTES OF FULL MEETING OF WELLS HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS (WHC)

HARBOUR OFFICE

28th November 2023 AT 7 PM

PRESENT: Mel Catton (MC) – Chair, Bob Ellis (BE), Adrian Dwyer (AD), Nick Groom (NG), Liam Pink (LP), Sally Wynne (SW),

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

1. CHAIRMAN WELCOME

MC thanked all for attending.

The Christmas Tide event held on Saturday went extremely well and many thought the best yet. MC wanted to thank the Harbour team for their assistance, the boats – mainly fisherman who made up the flotilla and all the volunteers who made the day so successful.

2. APOLOGIES

Karen Jones (KJ), Denys Hickey (DH),

3. FINANCIALS

SAC referred the WHC to the monthly financial paper recording the year to date management accounts. SAC reminded that whilst the accounts show a YTD loss, because of the large depreciation charge, the business actually remains cash generative. Overall, little more to report from the last meeting.

SAC asked the WHC to then refer to the papers relating to the annual review of tariffs and took the papers as read. SAC then invited comments and suggestions about what the WHC would like to do with tariffs bearing in mind inflation is still running quite high, albeit tailing off more recently. The Commissioners then debated at length whether to raise or remain static bearing in mind cost of living, overall pressure on our own finances and the overall sense of peoples view of having a boat in the harbour. AD thought it wasn't unreasonable to raise tariffs given almost everything else was costing more so why would the harbour be any different and people can't expect to see anything else. NG was more minded to be hesitant on increasing fees further as he had received feedback that the harbour costs were being deemed to be on the high side. As a compromise the WHC agreed that the WHC would keep mooring and berth prices the same but given our overall costs of running the harbour have significantly increased it was reasonable to increase harbour dues by 5% - which was still below inflation but also supported counteracting the running costs which dues are to pay for. SAC then asked the Commissioners if they were satisfied with the sailing club proposal which was to increase their annual fees to be more reflective of contributing more in line with the number of members boats that use the harbour to which the WHC endorsed. The other ad-hoc services such as hoist charges and use of the harbours own vessels would also be increased by 5%.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

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

5. HARBOUR EXECUTIVE UPDATE

RS asked the WHC to refer to the paper tabled 'Harbour Executive Report' and turning to the first item;

1. 360th anniversary/Heritage Harbour;
 - a. The heritage trial will now be worked on as the next project now that the other projects are coming to an end/quietening down.
 - b. Tide Gauge Project – the harbour team have been decorating internally, the outside needs doing also and then the inside presentation boards will start to be designed.
 - c. The commemorative prints by Godfrey Sayers are now done. RS is now considering how best to sell.
 - d. The Dr Hicks memoirs book is now being sold at a few outlets in town and will soon also be online via our website.
2. Albatros – Little (further) interaction has occurred and not really anything further to report.
3. WHMT constitution –SW & BE had annotated against the Scarborough maritime constitution paper circulated earlier in the month which was a helpful start to thinking about the changes that needed to be made to the trust. All agreed that the sentiment of the changes would be wider reaching than as they are now and greater focus on education, environmental awareness and sustainability initiatives – including the Lobster Hatchery operation. AD thought it should be fairly straightforward to wordsmith accordingly and offered to have a look at doing so.
4. Crown Estates –The representative emailed the WHC with the additional information. RS advised that he will look more closely at what they have provided but the initial impression was that how the low water markings have been shown isn't very accurate.
5. Car park barriers – SAC updated the WHC that the insurance claim is being dragged out by the claims assessor still although we do seem to be making progress at long last. The barriers themselves have now though been recommissioned and working as they should including the VMS (spaces/full) sign.
6. Succession planning – SAC advised that several applicants have come forward and a short list for interview was being drawn up by SAC/RS. Once the preferred candidate is identified then they will attend a further meeting and be introduced to Mel prior to any job offer. The interviews will be held early December and hopefully a successful candidate will be in place in the new year.
7. Lobster Hatchery – The pet lobster Simon will be moved to Skegness aquarium shortly as part of the re-homing exercise. Collaboration with the aquarium is also being looked into and once they have discussed further with management the curator will revert with ideas/plans.
8. Ardwin Barge – RS confirmed that following further discussions with the owners he doesn't think the WHC should pursue any further given the uncertainty about the boats costings; the work required to be done now and then the ongoing liability that would be attracted to such a vessel.
9. Wells Sailing Club – the Commodore of the club met with RS who is looking at a collaborative way the WHC and WSC could look at moorings around the sailing club land. RS welcomed the approach and advised there could be several options that could be looked into further. The idea was to set up a small task force, made up of WSC and WHC representatives. LP, SW and BE were all interested in joining the task force and whilst SW & BE are WSC members there wasn't thought to be any conflicts as the group would simply be studying

options/alternative rather than a decision making body. When the time comes for expenditure and to agree any particular idea then it would be brought back to the WHC as required.

10. Lifeboat Horse – The use of the lifeboat horse into the remembrance horse has been received extremely well around the town and further afield. The donation box has provided c£300 to the RBL in cash and probably more via the online QR donation card that was alongside the donation box. RS advised the horse will remain in situ for a couple of weeks until there is a good weather window/ tide to move it into winter store.

6. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

None

7. Staff Matters

None

8. AOB

Meeting was then closed @ 20.45

Approved.....

Mel Catton

Date.....30/1/24.....