

MINUTES OF FULL MEETING OF WELLS HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS (WHC)

HARBOUR OFFICE

26th March 2024 AT 6:30PM

PRESENT: Mel Catton (MC) – Chair, Karen Jones (KJ), Sally Wynne (SW), Adrian Dwyer (AD), Nick Groom (NG), Richard Whitelock (RW), Daniel Money (DM).

EXECUTIVE MEMBERS: Robert Smith (RS) Harbour Master, Tania Goodliffe (TG) Harbour Administrator

VISITORS: John Atkins (JA) – Larking Gowen LLP

1. CHAIRMAN WELCOME

MC thanked all for attending.

2. NEW APPOINTMENTS

MC welcomed DM to the board of commissioners and conducted the ceremony including reading and signing of the oath.

3. APOLOGIES

Liam Pink (LP), Bob Ellis (BE), Simon Walsingham (SWA)

4. FINANCIALS

TG explained that due to the delay in the 2023 accounts being finalised, that it wasn't possible send the financial summary prior to the meeting. JA from Larking Gowen LLP confirmed that this was the case and proceeded to present the 2023 draft accounts during the meeting.

AD and MC expressed concerns that they felt that WHC was not maximising its investments and JA suggested reviewing WHC's strategic Investment Plan next year.

TG explained that there was still an outstanding balance of approximately £11,000 from the car park insurance claim and that 'Admiral Insurance' were delaying the payment unnecessarily and TG has issued them with a 7-day payment notice.

MC would like to review the investment fund in 2025.

Electricity Expenditure has increased significantly by 196% since January 2023 – TG explained that since submitting meter readings in February 2024 WHC are due a credit of circa £12,000. *The harbour admin team have since found that there had been a miss-allocation of costs in July 23 to the energy account. Therefore 2024's accounts will show a significant reduction in energy billing.* TG will review the three energy providers that WHC currently uses later in the year.

Car Park Income has increased by 20% since 2022, and hopeful that 2024 will be a true representation of annual income.

Moorings and Dues Income has increased by 23%.

The unaudited accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023 were made available to all commissioners at the time of the meeting.

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

1. Shipwrights Parking.

- a. RS has permitted Briggs Builders to use the parking space whilst they're working on a nearby property.
- b. DM agreed to work with TG on this project and will approach Bailey, Bird & Warren Ltd in the first instance.
- c. AD and RW thought that offering the space to also be used as a seating area would likely generate more enquiries. MC and RS agreed in principle.

2. Albatros

- a. Metering of water and electricity has commenced in preparation for monthly billing.
- b. If the Albatros requires a parking space, this would be chargeable to cover the annual rental income of a lost parking space.
- c. No further update on an opening day.

3. Burnham Overy Harbour Trust 'BOHT' Buoys.

Holkham and BOHT have asked RS if WHC would reconsider their decision and continue to maintain Burnham Overy's buoys and markers as/when required. All parties agreed that the service will be chargeable going forward.

4. Coastal Exploration.

Coastal Exploration have been reviewing their business model and have decided to reduce their operations within the harbour due to other work commitments.

5. The Larn.

- a. The Larn has been painted, floor re-laid, lighting and seating are now in place.
- b. The Larn will add to WHC portfolio and will generate local interest, there is also the possibility of putting it under the Wells Maritime Trust umbrella as an education centre.
- c. Costs of building improvements and bespoke furnishings are so far in the region of £7,000.

6. Kayak Safari – Wells Paddle Sports

- a. Mr Swan wishes to run a Paddle sports company from the East End, offering Sea safari's incorporating bush craft skills and paddleboard and kayak tuition (during low & high tide) before being able to comment TG emailed Mr Swan asking for further details i.e hours of operations and what level of service (group size/number of sessions per day).

The harbour team expressed its main concerns regarding safety and the impact activities will have on local wildlife and to the marshes.

It is important that the level of service is befitting to the size of Wells and that Wells Paddle Sports communicate with Natural England and Holkham.

WHC agreed that a meeting with Wells Paddle Sports needs to take place as soon as possible with MC & TG, to better understand they're business plan and fees that will be due to WHC for the use of the slipways. Permits will be issued to all vessels operating as part of 'Wells Paddle Sports'

Action – TG to arrange a meeting and to review pricing structure that is like other harbours.

TG is considering drafting a policy, that prospective businesses can use prior to approaching WHC.

7. Lobster Hatchery.

TG is currently getting the hatchery ready for the season ahead and is hoping to start landing lobsters towards the end of April 2024.

Hornsea 3 are interested in supporting the Lobster Hatchery and have suggested that we apply for Community Funding. TG will apply before November's cut off date.

TG has been displaying posters for more volunteers and will be advertising on Indeed for seasonal weekend staff.

8. East Quay Burglary.

The Norfolk Constabulary have closed the case due to insufficient evidence.

TG has since met with Oak CCTV to see if any further improvements can be made to the south side, and they will be sending a proposal.

9. Jordans Land – Utilities

Electric and water are now in place and will be metered from the 1st June 2024.

Harbour team will seed the grass and trim the end of the west perimeter fence.

10. Quay Concessions

Bubble Tea will be opening at Easter.

WHC have discontinued 2 Lemons contract.

TG has reached out to other local food vendors in the area, in preparation for Spring/Summer 2025.

7. Flo & Joe.

Richard and Sarah sent a request by email for the decision of no alcohol to be reconsidered.

Further to a group discussion a vote was needed of which there were '2x Yes, 3x No and 4x abstentions, WHC remain with the decision of no alcohol for 2024 and to be further reviewed in February 2025.

WHC agreed to rent the plot to Richard and Sarah for storage between 1st November – 31st March. This will be incorporated within the Pitch Agreement.

8. Commissioner Updates.

NIL

9. Staff Matters.

MC and RS welcomed TG permanently to the team following a successful three-month probation and praised how quickly she had settled into the harbour team and positive feedback had been received by all.

Fred Whittaker will be leaving the Harbour Office on the 31st of March 2024 and will be having a team send off on the 27th March 2024.

Tristain Roberts will be starting his new role as of the 1st April 2024 as Assistant Harbour Master.

TG will be advertising for a general assistant for the summer months (June-Sept) and their time will be shared between the Harbour Office and Wells Maritime Trust.

10. AOB

NIL

Meeting was then closed @ 20.51

Approved.....

Mel Catton

Date..... 28th MAY 2024.

Webster