

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SALCOMBE HARBOUR BOARD
HELD AT CLIFF HOUSE, SALCOMBE ON MONDAY, 6 JUNE 2011**

MEMBERS

* Cllr R J Carter – Chairman

∅ Dr C C Harling – Vice-Chairman

* Cllr J Brazil

∅ Cllr M J Hicks

* Cllr S A E Wright

* Mr J Barrett

* Mr T Bass

* Mr H Marriage

* Mr M O'Brien

∅ Mr P Waring

* Denotes attendance

∅ Denotes apology for absence

Also in attendance and participating:
Cllr P W Hitchins

Officers in attendance:

All Agenda Items: Head of Service (Salcombe Harbour), Monitoring Officer and Senior Member Support Officer

SH.01/11 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Salcombe Harbour Board held on 28 March 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

SH. 02/11 **URGENT MATTERS**

The Chairman advised that he had agreed for one item of urgent business to be raised at this meeting as Cllr Brazil had given prior notice of his wish to make a statement. During the course of his statement, Cllr Brazil reminded the Board that he had served for eight years as a Board Member and four years as Chairman of the Board. He was disappointed therefore that South Hams District Council had taken the decision at its annual meeting to contradict the recommendation of the independent panel and appoint someone else as Chairman. He felt that he had no option but to resign with immediate effect, as his position had become untenable. However, he wanted to take this opportunity to resign formally, and put on record his thanks to the Harbour staff and his fellow Board Members. He stated that the Harbour Master and his team did a fantastic job, and since the reorganisation of governance, Salcombe Harbour had been a real success story. He hoped that he and his colleagues on the Board had helped. He said that he was saddened to leave, however, he wished the new Chairman all the best in his new role.

Cllr Brazil proceeded to state that he had two regrets, the first of which related to the renegotiation of the lease from the Duchy and he hoped that perhaps next year (Diamond Jubilee year) the Duchy may look favourably on reinstating the Pier. The second regret was that criticism tended to fall on the Harbour Master when in fact the Board should be the accountable body and accept any criticism.

In response, another Member stated that Cllr Brazil had been an extremely good Chairman. The Harbour Board was unique territory and sometimes had to take a tough line, and Cllr Brazil had helped to steer the Board in the right direction during his tenure as Chairman.

SH.03/11 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of the meeting. These were recorded as follows:-

Mr Jonno Barrett declared a personal interest in agenda item 7: 'Mooring Contracts – Late notification of Non Requirement' (Minute SH.06/11 below refers) by virtue of him having a mooring.

Cllr S A E Wright declared a personal interest in all agenda items by virtue of him having worked in a self employed capacity in the Harbour.

SH.04/11 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

One member of the public wished to utilise the public question time session. Comments were recorded as follows:-

Mr John Binns, Kingsbridge Boat Club

Mr Binns asked to raise two issues, the first of which was speeding in the Estuary. He had recently noticed an increase in the number of incidents of speeding. A brief discussion followed and the Harbour Master advised Mr Binns that previously the Board had considered a two pronged strategy to deal with speeding i.e. education and enforcement. However, whilst the Board had supported his education strategy, they were not prepared to release further resources for enforcement. A Board Member stated that this could be revisited at the end of the current season, and the Harbour Master added that speeding would never be eradicated but best efforts were made to address the issue.

The second issue related to a number of boats on the slip at Kingsbridge which had been there for some time. The Harbour Master responded that he was aware of the situation, and that the boats were in the process of being removed, however, there was a due process that had to be gone through. Mr Binns thanked the Harbour Master for this response and added that part of the problem was a lack of visible activity.

SH.05/11 **FEEDBACK FROM HARBOUR COMMUNITY FORUMS**

The Board received verbal update reports from the Board Members who attended the Harbour Community Forums, during which reference was made to:-

Salcombe Kingsbridge Estuary Conservation Forum

It was confirmed that the next meeting was due to take place at the end of June 2011.

Salcombe Kingsbridge Estuary Association (SKEA)

There were no matters reported to the Board. In addition, as the forum had not met for a number of months, the representative suggested that a letter be drafted to the Chairman of SKEA to determine their future intentions in relation to acting as a Community Forum.

Kingsbridge Estuary Boat Club

It was agreed that Hugh Marriage be the new representative for this Forum. There were no further issues to raise other than those previously heard under Public Question Time (minute SH.04/11 refers).

South Devon & Channel Shellfishermen

It was agreed that Cllr John Carter be the new representative for this Forum.

In addition to the existing Forums, the Harbour Master advised the Members that, according to best practice, a beneficiary group should be represented as a Community Forum. He suggested that Cllr Wright, with his previous commercial experience, may like to approach the commercial enterprises related to the Harbour to investigate the possibility of a Commercial Forum being created to represent their interests. Cllr Wright agreed to this, and advised that he would report back to the Board at a later date.

SH.06/11 **MOORING CONTRACTS – LATE NOTIFICATION OF NON REQUIREMENT**

Members were asked to consider a report which sought to consider the issues and make recommendations for a more effective process for future years in relation to renewal of mooring licences.

The Harbour Master introduced this item by explaining how the process of renewals worked, including the key dates in the year, and by explaining that previously this was a manageable issue but that, this year, possibly as a result of the recession, a considerable number of facilities had been given up at the last moment.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- (a) A Member felt that the deposit paid to secure the mooring should be increased to £150 from £50, rather than £100. Another Member felt that this increased deposit could disadvantage a number of customers. After discussion, it was agreed to increase the amount in the recommendation of the presented report to £125;
- (b) The Harbour Master advised that some other harbours did not need to follow the same process as they relied on their customers to advise them in good time, however at Salcombe the client base was made up of a number of owners who were absent for most of the year;
- (c) Members discussed bringing forward the date by which owners had to notify the Harbour Office if they did not want their mooring, to make it easier to re-let the mooring. After discussion, it was agreed to amend the recommendation of the presented report to 1 March;
- (d) A Member stated that the process should be less labour intensive and expensive. At the time that deposits were paid, customers should sign and certify to agree to pay in full or advise the Harbour by a specific date if the mooring was not going to be required.
- (e) A Member asked for an assurance that arrangements could be made for those customers who may have financial difficulty in paying the increased deposit.

It was then:

RESOLVED

That the Harbour Board **RECOMMEND** to Council that:

- (i) The Berthing Contract in the Moorings Policy be amended to provide that customers who indicate their desire to retain a facility and pay a deposit are contracted to pay for the facility. If the mooring is returned to the harbour before 1 March, the contract will be cancelled and the deposit lost. If the mooring is returned to the harbour after 1 March the contract will stand unless the facility can be re-let, when a pro rata refund will be made;
- (ii) Moorings which are not required and become available after 1 March will be offered to the waiting list. If offers to the top quarter of the waiting list are not accepted, the facility will be used for visitors for that season making the facility available to the waiting list for the following season; and
- (iii) The deposit payable for the retention of a Harbour Facility be increased to £125.

SH.07/11 **TOPICAL HARBOUR ISSUES**

The Board was asked to consider a report which updated Members on a range of topical harbour issues.

The Harbour Master took Members through the main areas of the report. During the subsequent discussion, reference was made to:-

- (a) Concerns over the garbage facilities for boat owners being used by residents of holiday cottages. Members were most concerned that the Harbour Authority was, in effect, paying for other resident's trade waste to be collected. The Executive Member for Assets agreed to take this matter up with the new Head of Service;
- (b) Concerns over the noise levels of commentary coming from the Rivermaid Ferry from Dartmouth. A number of Members had, in fact, heard the commentary transmitted from the boat whilst walking up the hill prior to the meeting. It was also felt that the commentary in Salcombe was louder than in Dartmouth. Members asked that the Harbour Master approach the owners of the Rivermaid and ask them to keep noise levels down within the Salcombe estuary.

It was then:-

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the proposal at paragraph 2.1.2 of the presented report be agreed; and
- (ii) That the comments at paragraphs 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 of the report be noted.

SH.08/11 **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

The Board was asked to consider a report relating to the Harbour's performance against agreed Performance Indicators (PIs).

The Harbour Master advised Members that this report was particularly useful in identifying trends, and he asked Members to advise him if there were particular areas that they would like to see reported. He then went on to take Members through the main areas of the report.

In discussion, reference was made to the water taxi, which the Harbour Master felt was an essential service to provide to customers who were used to 'walk on' marinas in other harbours. The Harbour Master was asked to provide statistics to show average taxi use per visiting yacht. However, it was also noted that the water taxi facility meant fewer dinghies floating around the harbour, which was a more general benefit.

Members were aware of the complete service that needed to be provided to customers to ensure that Salcombe Harbour remained competitive. The view was that customers only consider their end to end price, therefore although the prices for moorings and the water taxi may be very competitive, the fact that dining out and fuel were expensive could impact on a customers view of overall value for money. Unfortunately, these areas were outside the remit of the Harbour Board.

It was then:-

RESOLVED

That the Harbour's Performance against agreed Performance Indicators be noted.

SH.09/11

MATTERS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

The Board considered a report which identified matters for future consideration by the Harbour Board. The Harbour Master felt that this report, as a standing item, would help Members to drive the agenda forward and would enable more input from stakeholder groups.

In discussion, reference was made to:-

- a) the presented report including an error in that the date of the annual inspection should read as 12 July 2011 (not 12 July 2012);
- b) a date of 14 June 2011 had been set for a Member workshop, to discuss the five year strategic business plan and the consultation responses received so far. It emerged that a number of Members would be unable to attend on this date. The Harbour Master then asked if Members would be happy to set fees and charges at the September 2011 meeting in line with the existing five year plan, and if so, then the workshop could be postponed to a more convenient date. All Members agreed that it was important to take time over the new strategic business plan, and accepted that the fees and charges for next year would be set within the existing plan;
- c) the Blue Flag Award at South Sands was highlighted. This was an important achievement, and a Member asked that as part of the strategic plan, encouragement should be given to expanding this achievement, for example the reed bed at North Sands, if properly managed, could be the subject of a further application;
- d) a Member asked that environmental issues form part of the strategic plan, particularly following the success of the phosphate free project.

It was then:-

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the report be noted; and
- (ii) That the date of the July Harbour Board meeting and annual inspection be changed to 12 July 2011.

SH.10/11 **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

RESOLVED

That in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business in order to avoid the likely disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

SH.11/11 **SALCOMBE TOWN LANDINGS**

The Board was asked to consider a report which reviewed the tenders and sought to let a contract to complete the project.

Following a discussion, it was then:-

RESOLVED

That the Harbour Board **RECOMMEND** to Council that:

1. The contract for the Salcombe Town Landing Replacement and Extension Contract be let to the preferred identified contractor; and
2. The project be funded from Harbour Reserves.

(Meeting commenced at 2.30 pm and concluded at 4.50 pm).

Chairman