

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE SALCOMBE HARBOUR BOARD  
HELD AT CLIFF HOUSE, SALCOMBE ON TUESDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER 2011**

<b>Members in attendance</b>			
<b>* Denotes attendance</b>		<b>∅ Denotes apology for absence</b>	
*	Cllr R J Carter (Chairman)	*	Mr J Barrett
*	Cllr M J Hicks	*	Mr T Bass
*	Cllr K R H Wingate	*	Dr C C Harling (Vice Chairman)
*	Cllr S A E Wright	∅	Mr H Marriage
		*	Mr M O'Brien
		∅	Mr P Waring

<b>Also in attendance</b>
Cllr I Bramble and Cllr P W Hitchins

<b>Item No</b>	<b>Minute Ref No below refers</b>	<b>Officers in attendance and participating</b>
All agenda items		Head of Service (Salcombe Harbour), Principal Accountant and Senior Member Support Officer

**SH.24/11 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Salcombe Harbour Board held on 12 July 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**SH.25/11 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:-

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 and also having a mooring;

Mr J Barrett declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 'Review of Charges' (Minute SH.29/11 below refers), by virtue of having a mooring.

**SH.26/11 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Members of the public were in attendance and wished to utilise the public question time session.

Mr John Binns representing Kingsbridge Estuary Boat Club advised the Board that membership of their club was now up to 256 family members (approximately 400 people).

He wanted to raise the issue of insurance and checking of insurance documents. In response, the Harbour Master advised that the advice from the Council's Monitoring Officer was that boat owners should sign to confirm they have insurance, but it was not the responsibility of the Harbour Authority to inspect the documents as this would impact on liability. Mr Binns welcomed this clarity, as there had been a suggestion that not inspecting the documents was purely to save time. Mr Binns then raised the issue of speeding, and said he welcomed the enforcement action that had recently been taken, although it was unfortunate that it had happened at the end of the season. Mr Binns then raised the issue that since the dredging had taken place, a number of boat owners had stated that their boats had been mounted by other boats. In response, the Harbour Master advised that the mooring arrangements had not changed and, in fact, this was a problem with chain moorings. It was up to the mooring holder to ensure that their stern chains were correctly tensioned, this is also a problem on all of the pontoon berths within the harbour, it is the intention to raise the issue in the next newsletter the article will offer help to anyone who needs it. Finally, Mr Binns raised the issue of the standard of knowledge held by those who hired boats. In response, the Harbour Master advised that a short briefing was given but no qualifications were needed. Mr Binns then read a letter from a boat owner who had recently been involved in a collision with a speeding vessel, and the letter praised the rapid response of the Harbour Master and the work of the Harbour Office staff. The Harbour Master thanked Mr Binns for reading the letter, and confirmed to the Board that the two recent prosecutions had fallen in line with the Enforcement Policy set by the Board i.e. education, then warning and by law prosecution being the ultimate sanction.

Mr Tony Watson introduced himself as the new Chairman of the Salcombe Kingsbridge Estuary Conservation Forum. He raised the issue of the withdrawal of the emergency towing vessels and asked that the Board Members do what they could to raise awareness. In response, the Chairman advised that he had spoken to the local MP and he would continue to do so to make sure the concerns were highlighted.

Mr Squire raised the issue of collisions, and was advised that this would be addressed at agenda item 11 'Minor Collisions' (Minute SH.32/11 below refers), at which time he would be given the opportunity to speak.

Cllr Ian Bramble raised the issue of patrolling the River Avon in terms of addressing problems of speeding and marine theft, and also mentioned a marker buoy in poor condition. In response, the Harbour Master advised that the Harbour Master for Bantham was responsible for this, and it had nothing to do with Salcombe Harbour Board. The Salcombe Harbour Master did have a role as the Council's Maritime Officer, but the Bantham Harbour Master was employed by Evans Estates. If speeding were a particular issue, then a radar gun could be loaned to him to enable more effective patrols. Cllr Bramble thanked the Board and the Harbour Master for clarification on the points raised.

Mr Andrew Turner of South Sands Hotel raised the issue of seaweed on the beach. The Harbour Master explained that the beach was a South Hams District Council (SHDC) asset and there was little that the Harbour Authority could do. Following a brief discussion the Chairman advised that he would raise the issue with the appropriate department at SHDC.

Mr Tim Tucker of the South Sands Ferry endorsed the comments made by Mr Turner in relation to seaweed on the beach. He then raised a concern that comments sought from the members of the Marine Business Forum in relation to the proposed Strategic Business Plan 2012 – 2017 were not included in the documentation presented today. In response, a Board Member advised that the documentation presented related to a consultation event prior to the setting up of the Forum. In addition, another Board Member asked that Mr Tucker stress to his fellow members of the Forum that their views were taken seriously.

SH.27/11

## **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**

Mr Tony Watson had introduced himself to the Board as the new Chairman of the Forum during the previous item (Public Question Time (Minute SH.26/11 below refers). The representative of the Forum confirmed that there was no further information to report.

### **Salcombe Kingsbridge Estuary Association (SKEA)**

The representative had no items to report.

### **Kingsbridge Estuary Boat Club**

The representative was unable to attend, however Mr Binns had updated the Board on membership, an event that had raised £200 for the RNLI and recent activity in relation to Boatwatch during the public forum.

### **South Devon & Channel Shellfishermen**

There was nothing to update, other than awaiting the outcome of the Defra report.

### **Kingsbridge and Salcombe Marine Business Forum**

The representative had no items to report.

**SH.28/11 2012/13 BUDGET**

The Board considered a report which set out the 2012/13 budget which had been built upon the principles adopted in the Salcombe Harbour Strategic Business Plan, and which detailed the financial impact of the proposals contained therein.

The Harbour Master was able to report that the budget had been set at an almost standstill position. Taking inflation and increasing utility costs into account, this was an achievement, and was testament to getting costs under control.

During discussion, the following points were raised:

- A Member queried cash collection costs, and the Harbour Master responded that these costs relate to the 2% which is charged when credit cards are used;
- In response to increased postage costs being used, a Board Member suggested that perhaps discounts could be given for people who used electronic communication methods;
- A Member queried a sum in Reserves, and was advised that this related to the proposal for showers on Whitestrand. The Chairman confirmed that the Town Council had been consulted, and plans had been drawn up and a planning application would be submitted imminently;
- The Executive Member for Finance and Audit advised the Board that he had been working closely with the Principal Accountant on the matter of HQ costs. This year there was a reduction of £500, and it was hoped to reduce that further;

Finally, a number of Members felt that this was a good budget, and were happy to support approval.

It was then:

**RECOMMENDED**

That Council be **RECOMMENDED** to approve the 2012/13 Salcombe Harbour budget items, as set out within the presented report.

**SH.29/11 REVIEW OF CHARGES**

The Board considered a report which had been prepared to enable Board Members to recommend the Harbour rates and charges for 2012/13.

The Harbour Master advised Members that, having approved the budget during the previous item (Minute SH.28/11 refers), the Board now had to consider the fees and charges which had been proposed at a level to address the deficit resulting from the setting of the budget. He also stated that he felt it was important to make step changes to the fees and charges, as this enabled Members to better judge the impact and mitigate any financial risk than if a number of elements were changed all at once.

The Harbour Master took Members through the proposals and the following comments were made:

- To the proposal to freeze charges for visiting vessels arriving from sea, Members were broadly in agreement. The Harbour Master added that discounts and promotions should continue, and that the seasonal changes to charges reflected the level of service delivered at different times of the year;
- There was some discussion over the proposals to freeze mooring charges for visiting vessels on foreshore moorings and to relax the rule restricting the number of days that a boat can pay casual daily dues. Members generally felt that these proposals would encourage more people to use the facilities, however there was some concern over the financial impact and risk of reduced income;
- The Harbour Master stated that he proposed a 1% increase in the Whitestrand Landing fees, however, a number of Members were concerned at this increase and the impact it would have on the commercial operators, who would already be under their own financial pressures. Following some debate, it was agreed that the Whitestrand Landing fees be frozen;
- In terms of the presented Appendix A of all other categories of charges and dues, the proposal was to increase by 1%. The Board Members discussed this, and, taking into consideration the freezing of Whitestrand Landing fees, extending the number of days daily dues can be paid to seven from three, it was agreed that the charges detailed at Appendix A be increased by 2%.

It was then:

**RECOMMENDED**

That Council be **RECOMMENDED**

1. to approve the changes to the charging policy set out in paragraph 2.1 of the presented report, with the exception of Whitestrand Landing fees which will be frozen: and
2. to approve an increase in the proposed charges as presented in Appendix A of the presented report of 2%, for implementation from 1 April 2012.

SH.30/11 **STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN 2012 - 2017**

The Board considered a report which appraised Members of the progress toward the development of a five year Business Plan for the Harbour Authority and which sought approval of a timetable for full public consultation through to final ratification of the Plan.

The Harbour Master introduced the report, and advised Members that he felt 2012 – 2017 should be a period of consolidation. There was one infrastructure project to address, the Kingsbridge Basin, and the Moorings Policy should be re-reviewed, but otherwise it would be a time for the Board to take stock.

Following some minor comments Members agreed the report. Members also agreed to attend the public consultation events as detailed in the presented report.

It was then:

**RESOLVED** That:-

1. the Board consider the feedback from the first consultation period and make comment where appropriate with regard to amendments;
2. the Board endorse the work completed to date on the Salcombe Harbour Strategic Business Plan;
3. the sixth draft of the Strategic Business Plan be published for public consultation.

SH.31/11 **REVIEW OF MOORINGS ALLOCATION ISSUES**

The Board was asked to consider a report which set out a specific Moorings Allocation issue.

The Harbour Master introduced the report, and explained that the applicant was not a SHDC Council Tax Payer, but that he was requesting a mooring where there were surplus moorings available.

A Board Member felt that as the policy stated priority should be given to SHDC Council Tax Payers, this did not prevent moorings being allocated to others, providing they were available. Should a waiting list develop, and priority be given to SHDC Council Tax Payers as stated in the Policy, then the two year rule would apply whereby the applicant would have two years to locate an alternative mooring.

On the proviso that the applicant be made aware of the two year rule, it was then:-

**RESOLVED**

To allocate a Mooring to Mr Montandon as per his request and in line with the Moorings Allocation Policy.

SH.32/11 **MINOR COLLISIONS**

The Board considered a report which raised the issue of the number of minor collisions which go unreported within the harbour, to enable a discussion on the issue and consider a strategy to address the problem.

The Harbour Master introduced the report, and advised the Board that collisions were inevitable, but it was galling for owners when collisions were not reported. There were measures in place, for example the Yacht Club briefed all Members and participants to report all collisions. In addition there was a harbour bye law that all collisions must be reported.

The issue of unreported collisions came to a head following one boat that had been holed on both sides within a month without being reported.

By working with the Yacht Club and the ICC to ensure the requirement to report collisions, the situation has improved markedly.

Mr Squire of Salcombe Yacht Club (SYC) advised the Board that the Yacht Club had gone further and that boats could now be disqualified and that rescue boat crews were also watching carefully for any collisions.

A Board Member welcomed the response of the SYC and accepted that sometimes it was not straightforward to decide when a collision was a nudge. However, he did ask that the rules given to sailors should indicate in bold that collisions must be reported.

It was then:-

**RESOLVED:**

That the Harbour Board follow the measures set out in paragraph 2.4 of the presented report in an attempt to encourage responsible use of the estuary, where all collisions, no matter how minor, are reported.

SH.33/11 **MATTERS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION**

The Board considered a report which identified matters for future consideration by the Harbour Board.

The Harbour Master introduced the report, and advised Members that the report was self explanatory.

In relation to the recommendation for setting up a working group, a number of Members advised that they could not attend on the proposed date and it was agreed that the Harbour Master would find an alternative.

The other issue to note was the letter received from the Chairman of Pennon Group plc in response to concerns raised by the Harbour Board relating to the overflow of sewage into the Estuary. There was general disappointment with the response, however it was decided to write to Defra as suggested in the letter, with a copy to the local MP, and also to raise with the Chief Executive of SHDC, as this was a wider issue affecting also Hope Cove and Wembury.

It was then:-

**RESOLVED:**

To hold a Harbour Board working group meeting to discuss the public information campaign required for smooth implementation of the changes to the Salcombe Town Landings.

(Meeting commenced at 2.30 pm and concluded at 4.30 pm).

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Chairman