

TORRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCILHARBOUR BOARD MEETINGVirtual Meeting via ZoomThursday, 16 June 2022 - 2.30 pm

- PRESENT Councillor R Hicks (Chair)
Councillors P Christie, K James and D Bushby
- Independent Members – Mr N Hardaker, Mr T Gibbs and
Mr J Puddy
- ALSO PRESENT R Haste - Operational Services Manager
P Brown - Harbour Master
K Jarman - Port Facilities Security Officer
S Cawsey - Democratic Services Officer
T Vanstone - Senior Electoral & Democratic Services
Officer

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

117. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor McGeough.

118. MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor Hicks, seconded by Councillor Bushby and –

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2022 be agreed as a correct record.

A recorded vote was taken.

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
Bushby, D	X		
Christie, P	X		
Mr T Gibbs			
Mr N Hardaker	X		
Hicks, R	X		
James, K	X		
McGeough, D			
Mr J Puddy	X		

Vote: (For 6) – Mr Gibbs was not present when the vote was taken

119. ACTION LIST

The Action List was reviewed and updated.

Minute 98 –

Mutual Co-operation – Ilfracombe

The Harbour Master to explore opportunities for further mutual co-operation with Ilfracombe.

16.6 – carrying out bi-monthly or monthly security drills with Ilfracombe. The scope for co-operation harbour mastering wise is relatively limited, interaction with Ilfracombe when it comes to security and sharing experiences is working well. Item to be removed from action list.

Mooring Policy

The Harbour Master to explore ways to generate income through moorings.

16.6 – Mooring Policy has been approved and detailed in Agenda item 8. Starting to implement parts of the Policy – getting people to do what they have signed up to.

120. PUBLIC CONTRIBUTIONS

There were no public contributions.

121. AGREEMENT OF AGENDA ITEMS PARTS I AND II

There are no Part II items.

122. URGENT MATTERS OF INFORMATION BROUGHT FORWARD WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIRMAN AND THE COMMITTEE

No matters were brought forward.

123. PORT & HARBOUR ACCOUNTS

The Operational Services Manager explained that no update would be given on the accounts because Quarter 4 had not yet been finalised by the Finance Team – still in Quarter 1. Update to be given at next meeting.

The following matters were raised and discussed:

- Concerns were raised at the way in which Local Authority accounts are set up. The Operational Services Manager agreed to speak to the Accounts

Department with a view to changing the format for the next meeting. Councillor James commented that he was not averse to the format as it is and believed it to be well documented.

- The draft Outturn shows a profit. The Operational Services Manager reiterated his response given at the last meeting, namely that the majority of profits had come from staffing. Following the passing of Paul Labistour, this post had remained vacant for quite some time and a contribution made to the pension had been returned to the Council.

The Operational Services Manager explained that with the resources now in place, the ultimate aim is in the first instance to make the Harbour and pilotage break even, and then work towards making a profit.

124. BIDEFORD HARBOUR - SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Harbour Master gave the following verbal update:

All 15 sections of the Safety Management System had now been posted on the website and it is meant to be a live document or section of the website, so when amendments are made to the document it gets updated live.

If any Member had comments to make on the document, they were asked to contact Paul Brown or Kelly Jarman.

125. HARBOUR MASTERS QUARTERLY REPORT

The Group received an update from the Harbour Master detailing the activities and commercial vessel movements in the port and estuary since the last meeting on 20 April 2022. It was confirmed it had been a busy quarter for Bideford Harbour, although there had been no commercial vessel movements.

The Harbour Master responded to an enquiry from Councillor Hicks confirming that the vessel referred to was the "Fruit for Harvest", it is insured and the owner had provided all the documentation and evidence required prior to arriving in the Harbour. It is important that if a vessel is turned away, there must be reasons for doing so. The Port Safety Code is very clear on what can and cannot be done when it comes to turning boats away. The Harbour Master addressed all questions/points raised by the Group.

During the discussion the following matters were raised:

Middle Dock – the Harbour Master advised that he and Kelly Jarman had had input into this project as Marine Professionals. Councillor Hicks and the Leader are also closely involved.

Dredger Deo Gloria – a PEC was done for the new captain and this Certificate will last for a year. If he returns within the year, then his PEC will stand and income

from pilotage will be at a reduced rate of 25%. If expired will be required to do a further PEC.

Sibelco – The Harbour Master gave an update on a conversation he had had with Sibelco and confirmed that negotiations are still ongoing.

Fuel costs and road transport - Councillor Christie asked if there was any scope for new cargoes due to the increase in fuel costs because up until now road transport had been cheaper. The Harbour Master reported that he had spoken to UK shipping regarding this matter, but nothing had as yet come forward. Anyone with connections/suggestions to contact him and he will pursue the matter further.

Councillor Hicks mentioned that previously Devon County Council had used the Harbour for salt cargo. The Harbour Master to speak with the Head of Communities & Place re a contact at Devon County Council to discuss this matter.

Previously used to import timber on a large scale – Councillor Christie asked if this could be revisited.

The pros and cons of various cargoes and haulage companies was discussed.

Lundy Company – the Harbour Master gave a verbal update on the meeting he had attended with Mr Derek Green of the Lundy Company. The purpose of the meeting was to agree rates and charges to the Lundy Island Company for the future operating of the “Oldenburg” out of Bideford. The outcome from the meeting was for Mr Green to send a scale of charges that he thinks is fair and equitable to the Harbour Master. Following discussion of the details with the Operational Services Manager, a report will then be presented to the Harbour Board Group for discussion.

Slipway Clearance – Mr Puddy suggested using a yard scraper on a regular basis to help with keeping the slipway clear. The Harbour Master said he was open to suggestions but asked for the matter to be put on hold to see how quick the slipway re-silts.

Mr Puddy enquired about the potential for adding a trailer charge for those people who are launching at the slipway in the same way as a trailer charge is in place at Appledore. The Harbour Master said a significant factor is that Appledore is far busier than the Bideford. If the slipway started to be used more then maybe but would need to be cautious in putting the Council’s resources to something that is not busy. The Operational Services Manager agreed to speak to the Car Parking Manager regarding areas for parking and the purchase of tickets.

Oil Spill Plan and IME – the Incident Management Plan – incident management exercise will now take place on 20 July.

Mooring Policy – Members expressed their concerns regarding the “Boa Pescadore” and sought assurance from the Harbour Master that the situation will be monitored.

Harland – the Harbour Master confirmed that his role in the case had been explained to him very clearly.

Squirty Fountains – Once a quote to repair the fountains has been received it will be brought to the Group for discussion. The manufacturing company had been contacted to ask them to look at the fountains, still awaiting a date. The Harbour Master agreed for Mr Gibbs to be present.

Harbour dredging – application had been submitted to the MMO for Mr Glover to carry out dredging in the harbour authority area. The Harbour Master will report to the Group when feedback is received.

Harbour Users Group – The Harbour Master referred to the list of suggested attendees in the report and asked for comments from Members.

The following proposed attendees were put forward:

- Skern Lodge
- Jet Skies – the Operational Services Manager to forward contact details
- Bideford Gig Club

The Harbour Master advised that the proposed Agenda set out in the report is a standard Harbour Users Group agenda, but if Members had any further thoughts or ideas for inclusion on the agenda then to contact him.

The Group noted the report.

126. PROPOSAL FOR COFFEE VAN ON FISHERMAN'S QUAY

The Harbour Master gave a verbal report, summarising the document giving full details, that had been circulated to Members of the Group.

The comments of the Harbour Master included:

- Bringing life to the Quay which is at present unused
- Bringing income to the Harbour which had not been there previously and to ensure the income goes to the Harbour account
- May encourage other businesses
- Forces Officers to look at the utility of that part of the Quay
- There are other areas the horse box may go in and not necessarily taking away car parking spaces
- Management of rubbish which will need to be written into the licence
- Tables, chairs and any other movements on a commercial Quay will need to be carefully managed
- Charges to be looked at

During the lengthy discussion that ensued, comments made included the following:

- Councillor Hicks expressed concerns with setting a precedent, as a Council should go out to tender to give others the same opportunity. He felt it could raise big potential problems.
- Opportunity to gain revenue
- To treat each and every application on its own merits
- To put in stipulations such as to be responsible for clearing the site of litter at the end of each day
- The need to look at the plan as a whole for the use of the Quay rather than have one business start up
- Require further details and information
- The application is temporary not permanent

The Operational Services Manager advised that all details had not been included and the reason for bringing it to Harbour Board was to get Member views in principle as to whether this is something to consider going forward.

Councillor Bushby proposed, in principle, that the application be accepted at face value, subject to meeting the necessary conditions considered appropriate by the Council.

Councillor James seconded the proposal.

Further discussion followed and the advice from the Operational Services Manager was he would speak to the Legal Department regarding the correct process, and for the Harbour Master and Deputy Harbour Master to look at operational implications and what is required in the Lease Agreement. To expedite this matter to ensure the café can be operating for the summer season, timescales and the process to be taken was discussed.

Mr Hardaker left the meeting at 15.59.

A recorded vote was taken on Councillor Bushby's proposal, seconded by Councillor James.

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
Bushby, D	X		
Christie, P	X		
Mr T Gibbs	X		
Mr N Hardaker			
Hicks, R			X
James, K	X		
McGeough, D			
Mr J Puddy	X		

(Vote: For 5, Abstentions 1) - Mr Hardaker had left the meeting.

127. PROPOSED FUTURE MEETING DATES

The next Harbour Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday 20 October 2022 at 2.30pm – venue to be confirmed.

128. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Puddy from the Freshspring vessel reported on the poor condition along the Llandavisia Walk. The Team from the Freshspring had undertaken the task of removing weeds alongside the ship which had improved the appearance, but when looking along Llandavisia Walk it is in poor disorder.

Other concerns raised by Mr Puddy was when the Freshspring Team were clearing, they noticed that the growth along the front of the Quay is lifting the paving slabs. Also the retaining wall is actually collapsing which is making that part of the area very dangerous.

The Operational Services Manager advised that the upkeep of the structural elements of the Quay is the Estates Team, and he will message them for someone to look at this issue. The weeds issue will also be looked into.

Mr Puddy raised a further issue concerning the Water Festival and the Rotary Club speaking to the fire brigade about washing the steps down. He advised them not to take on something that is the Port Authorities responsibility without speaking to someone. The Harbour Master confirmed they should speak to him and asked that Mr Puddy advise them of this.

The meeting commenced at 2.30pm and closed at 4.04