

HARBOURS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8 DECEMBER 2021

A recording of the meeting can be accessed on the committee page by using the following link: [Harbours Committee](#)

Present: Cllrs Mark Roberts (Chairman), David Gray, Rob Hughes (Vice-Chairman), Mary Penfold and Sarah Williams.

Independent Members:- William Ellwood and Lee Hardy

Also present:

Cllr Ray Bryan – Portfolio Holder for Environment, Travel and Harbours
Dave Caddy – Vice-Chairman of Weymouth HCG
Chris Turner – Chairman of Lyme Regis HCG
Simon Miles – Chairman of Bridport HCG
William Heaps – Designated Person

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Paul Ackrill (Service Manager (Finance)), Lara Altree (Senior Lawyer - Regulatory), Ken Buchan (Head of Environment and Wellbeing), Claire Connolly (Financial and Admin Manager, Weymouth Harbour), Jamie Joyce (Weymouth Harbour Master), Matthew Penny (Leader Manager - Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM)), Karyn Punchard (Corporate Director for Place Services), James Potten (Communications Business Partner - Place), James Radcliffe (Bridport and Lyme Regis Harbour Master), John Sellgren (Executive Director, Place), Kirstie Snow (Business Partner - External Affairs) and Denise Hunt (Democratic Services Officer).

26. Apologies

No apologies for absence were received at the meeting.

Cllr Louie O'Leary was not present shortly after the start of the meeting due to technical difficulties in accessing the meeting.

27. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Mark Roberts declared a general interest as he held a mooring at West Bay Harbour.

Cllr Mary Penfold declared a general interest as the Chairman of SCOPAC.

28. Public Participation

There were no written statements or questions received.

29. Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that he had attended the South West Aquaculture Network AGM and conference on 28 October at Kingston Maurward and observed the operation to lift out the sunken fishing vessel FV Gitte from Weymouth Harbour. He congratulated the harbours team for the way in which more serious pollution had been mitigated and also thanked those officers involved in the recent ministerial visit.

30. Harbour Consultative Group (HCG) Minutes

The minutes of the HCG meetings that had taken place since the last meeting of the Harbours Committee were presented by the following HCG representatives:-

Lyme Regis (12 October 21) - Chris Turner, Chairman
Bridport (28 October 21) – Simon Miles, Chairman
Weymouth (10 November 21) - Dave Caddy, Vice-Chairman

Noted

31. Harbour Master Updates

The Harbour Masters presented their updates.

Weymouth Harbour

Following presentation of the report, members asked about a decrease in the number of commercial visiting fishing vessels.

The Harbour Master explained that 3 commercial visiting vessels that had formerly made up the majority of commercial visits had now taken up annual berths.

It was hoped that the new fish landing quay might attract other visiting commercial vessels in future.

Bridport & Lyme Regis

Further to his report, the Harbour Master confirmed that work scheduled in early December for the timber piles to be installed to the east side of West Bay had been moved to January 2022.

Noted

32. Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Engineering Update

The Lead Manager – FCERM presented an update report for the three Dorset Council harbours.

Following his report, he responded to concerns raised during consideration of the HCG minutes, explaining that it was not possible to carry dredging out at exactly the same time each year due to dependency of this work on tides and general weather factors.

The Lead Manager also provided an update on the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) highlighting that this was a high level non-statutory policy document for coastal defence planning that included 3 categories for “no active intervention”, “manage realignment” and “hold the line”. The Plan was in the process of being refreshed by the Environment Agency to include updated legislation and any new information in relation to climate change with an expected completion date in 2022.

Noted

33. Harbours Budget, Fees and Charges 2022-23

The Committee considered a report setting out the budget requirement for the Harbour revenue budgets for Weymouth, Bridport and Lyme Regis Harbours for 2022-23 and beyond, including fees and charges for all harbours and the Asset Management Plan improvements for Weymouth Harbour.

Following presentation of the report members asked about the impact of the increase in the price of utilities (in particular electricity) and were informed that this could be recharged directly to the customer at any time there was a price increase, meaning that the market price was always reflected in the fees.

The Committee also asked whether Parking Services had provided a parking revenue forecast, based on previous knowledge of the profitability of individual car parks. It was suggested that car parking could be part of a premium package to harbour customers in future which was noted for future debate.

Members were advised that work was ongoing with finance colleagues to assess how much car park income would be expected to be moved into the harbours budget at the end of each year.

The Committee was minded to agree to the recommendations contained in the report.

The Executive Director of Place stated that he had listened to the presentation, debate and vote and would determine the report recommendation in line with the committee’s “minded to” decision.

Decision:-

1. That the fees and charges for 2022/23 for Weymouth Harbour be approved;
2. The Asset Management Plan for 2022/23 for Weymouth Harbour subject to a mid-year review be approved; and
3. That the fees and charges for 2022/23 for Bridport and Lyme Regis Harbours be approved.

Recommended to Full Council:-

4. The budget request for 2022/23 for Weymouth Harbour.
5. The budget request for 2022/23 for Bridport Harbour.
6. The budget request for 2022/23 for Lyme Regis Harbour.

Reason for Decisions

The Harbours Committee has the responsibility for the harbour finances within a budget set by the Full Council.

34. Harbours Parking Policy

The Committee considered a report concerning alignment of the Dorset Council Parking Policy to Dorset Council public car parks within the harbours estate.

The report was presented by the Head of Environment & Wellbeing who explained the standardisation of charges in accordance with the Parking Policy would reduce confusion and inconvenience for customers. It was the intention for Parking Services to continue to manage these car parks and for the net income to be transferred to the harbours budget to support harbours infrastructure, renewal, repairs and maintenance.

Within the Lyme Regis and Bridport harbours there was parking associated with slipway customers and leased areas providing parking for commercial fishermen and harbour traders, that were not available to the general public. It was proposed that these areas would continue to operate separately from the Dorset Council run car parks and that harbours manage the charges for these areas going forward.

Members asked about residential parking within quayside car parks, particularly in West Bay, as well as the proportion of income allocated to the harbours budget from those permits allowing use of car parks within the harbours estate.

The Head of Environment and Wellbeing and the Portfolio Holder agreed to seek further clarification from Parking Services on both points. However, it was confirmed that Weymouth Pavilion car park would be excluded from the permit scheme in future.

Members proposed that a workshop to explore the issues raised around parking permits was convened, reporting back to the next meeting of the Harbours Committee.

The Committee was minded to agree to the recommendation contained in the report.

The Executive Director of Place stated that he had listened to the presentation, debate and vote and would determine the report recommendation in line with the committee's "minded to" decision

Decision: That charges for car parks within the Dorset Council Harbours estate align to other Dorset Council car parks as presented in the report to Place and Resources Overview Committee on 19 October 2021 and Cabinet on 8 November 2021 with the exception (where it applies) of vehicle and trailer parking that relates to slipway use and existing allocated parking for commercial fishermen and harbour traders.

Reason for Decision

There has been an extensive piece of work done in considering how parking charges and regulations should be transformed across Dorset following the convergence of the predecessor councils. This has been done with significant stakeholder engagement and comparative parking charge benchmarking. It is important that charges for car parks which are located inside the Dorset Council Harbours estate align with other Dorset Council Car parks as this standardisation will provide consistency of charging within our coastal towns and reduce confusion and inconvenience for our customers.

35. Forward Plan

The Committee noted its forward plan.

Inclusion of car parking charges and permits in the forward plan would be determined following the outcome of the meeting of the proposed working group.

36. Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

37. Exempt Business

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 11.30 am

Chairman

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