

Weymouth Harbour Consultation Group (WHHCG)  
Tuesday 10 November 2020 (Teams, 19:00-21:00)

Present		
Dave Brown	DB	Dorset Police
Ken Buchan	KB	Dorset Council
Dave Caddy	DC	Harbour Traders Representative (shoreside traders close to harbour)
Alistair Clarke	AC	Chair, Harbour Consultative Group – Boatfolk
Kathy Claydon	KC	Inner Harbour User Representative
Claire Connolly	CC	Finance & Admin Manager Weymouth Harbour
Tim Day	TD	Clubs Representative (Sailing/rowing/angling/leisure clubs with vessels)
Roan Doyle	RD	Dorset Police
Mary Harris	MH	Harbour Traders Representative (substitute)
Alice Higgins	AH	Leisure Weymouth Beach Users Representative (swimmers/board/kite/personal watercraft/paddle boarders)
Cllr Colin Huckle	CH	Elected Member Weymouth Town Council
Cllr Rob Hughes	RH	Dorset Council Elected Member and Vice Chair Harbours Committee
Jamie Joyce	JJ (HM)	Weymouth Harbour Master
Becky McGowan	BM	Harbour Admin Bridport & Lyme Regis (Note Taker)
Jamie Pullen	JP	Charter Boat Representative
Cllr Mark Roberts	MR	Dorset Council Elected Member and Chair of Harbours Committee
Andy Sargent	AS	RNLI Representative
Terri Studley	TS	Commercial Fishermen Representative

## 1. INTRODUCTIONS, APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

No apologies for absences where received.

Individual introductions from all attendees.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

## 3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

JP – Queried whether previous questions he raised to the Group and the answers had been circulated to the group and Harbours Committee members.

MR - Responded, the questions had been circulated to committee members however this had not yet been discussed as a separate item as no questions had arisen from the answers provided.

## 4. WEYMOUTH HARBOUR UPDATE

JJ – Took this opportunity to introduce himself to the group and provided some background information of previous experiences. Jamie has completed his first week as Weymouth Harbour Master (HM) and expressed, “I feel very fortunate to be appointed to the Weymouth Harbour Master position and to be working with an exceptional team.

I would like to build on the hard work that yourselves and Keith have completed and continue to operate Weymouth as a safe and efficient harbour. I look forward to the opportunity to work with you all and gain the benefit of your expertise and knowledge. In the meantime, and for the future, please feel free to come into the office and discuss any concerns, new ideas or experiences”.

## 5. HARBOURS STRATEGY UPDATE AND GROUP INVOLVEMENT

KB – Gave thanks to all members for their participation in the virtual Harbour Strategy workshops and promoting the strategy surveys. Weymouth held 2 meetings and 1 each for Bridport and Lyme Regis. Registration was high for attendees of the virtual workshops, but attendance at the workshops relatively low in comparison with around 50 participants. However, there has been in excess of 500 responses to the survey. Dorset Coast Forum (DCF) officers are currently in the process of analysing surveys which hold detailed responses, to filter key points and early priorities for Committee discussion. Next, a sub-group from the Harbours Committee will help draft priorities which the Harbour Consultative Group will help to 'sense' check and give their feedback before they are put out for public consultation. All returns will help draft the Harbour Strategy. Once in place, further consultation with the Harbour Consultative Group and Harbours Committee will be held and the Strategy finalised. Timeline, looking at next Spring/early Summer.

**Action: DCF officers to set up some informal sessions for the Harbour Consultative Group to help with Strategy development**

## 6. CONSULTATIVE GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

KB introduced this agenda item – This is AC's last meeting as chair of WHCG, another representative from Boatfolk (formerly Dean & Reddyhoff) will take AC's place on the group, but a new Chair of the group will be elected at the next meeting of the Consultative Group and information will be sent out following this meeting regarding how this process will work and how nominations can be made.

With a change in the Consultative Group Chair, the Harbours Committee Chair (Cllr Mark Roberts), a new Harbour Master for Weymouth and comments around the Terms of Reference and the Consultative Group made at the last Harbours Committee, this would seem like an appropriate time to discuss how the group operates. The role of the Dorset Council Harbours Consultative Groups is

- To be the primary consultative body on all matters that substantially affects the management, maintenance, improvement, conservation, protection, and regulation of the harbours
- To highlight safety issues with harbour users and promote safety policy and improvements onshore and afloat
- To make recommendations to the Harbours Committee and Harbour Masters on the operation of the harbours
- To co-ordinate consultation and community involvement in the development of the harbours
- To provide an opportunity for the sharing of information between the harbour management and the harbour users, local community and visitors
- To provide a channel of communication on urgent issues to the Harbours Committee and Harbour Masters

KB – Put forward some questions to the group;

Do you feel the Consultative Group works in its current format?

Could anything be improved in the way it operates in order to feed back to Harbours Committee?

Do you feel you have the support you need to harvest that information from the users you represent and gain feedback? Is there any support that we could provide to assist with this?

Responses;

AS – Prior to the group running with a restricted membership personal views and self-interest caused conflict instead of working together as a group. To keep a restricted group will allow for better group working and support for each other's sector.

JP – Has been standing within the group for some time and feels that there is consistency as a group, however, expressed others should also have the opportunity to sit in the group for broader input.

JP – Asked how many group members have emailed constitutes for discussion to their members and do their members know who they should be emailing? He expressed representatives should be sending the agenda and minutes to their members for further reach within the Harbour for feedback.

TS – Welcomed the new Harbour Master, and explained he communicates with around 30-40 people in Weymouth and Portland association, (Fishermen) and picks out who is best to discuss issues or requests if there is anything anyone wants himself to discuss within the meeting.

TD – The consultative group is about being cooperative, perhaps people are confused about the role of the Consultative Group and the level of issues the group should be concerned with. Many issues can be resolved by Heads of Clubs and other members. The Consultative Group is not perfect, but it does work.

KC – As an inner Harbours representative, anything important would be circulated however, the lack of contact information available to her made communication difficult.

JJ – Suggested putting KC's and other representatives contact details on the harbour website to better promote the representatives and the HCG in general.

**Action: Explore Consultative Group Members contact details being put on the Harbour website - JJ/CC/BM**

MR – stated the group are his "eyes and ears" via him things can be fed into the appropriate channels in Dorset Council, even subjects such as pedestrianisation. He can communicate and provide information to appropriate officers and Cabinet members across Place services. JP's points are welcomed and will be discussed more fully in the future. Committee will discuss issues and views on all points. Please do discuss any issues initially with JJ as it could be that they can be resolved by the Harbour Master.

JP – Expressed the need for Committees to work side by side to prevent distrust as new people emerge within the groups. Key point going forward would be for everyone to have a clean slate and build up trust and allow free flow of communication.

AC – Asked that any feedback on how to improve methods of communications between HCG members and the people they represent would be welcomed and to liaise with KB on any ideas.

JP – Previous Harbour Committee meeting, MR mentioned public meets for free flow of information, for example public meets on YouTube channels. Is this something still in thoughts of going ahead?

KB – Asked, do the group members think it will be beneficial for sectors to have regular open meetings, 2-3 times a year? Currently in discussion with HM of how it would work.

Further discussion was held around communication between the group members. It was agreed that the Harbour Master should hold meetings with associations initially to build up new relationships and in the meantime for associations to bring any issues to HM attention.

KB – In the future the Consultative Group will work a little differently with regard to its administration, questions submitted in advance would now go to the Chair of the HCG not the Harbour Master and the minutes will be recorded by a business support officer. The group should work somewhat independently of the harbour office with the Harbour Master and other Dorset Council officers attending in a support capacity to answer questions and provide updates. The group should have the freedom and independence to present issues to the Harbours Committee.

MR – there are new people involved in the Harbours Committee who are keen to get all opinions and for things to be taken to the appropriate level.

KB – Suggested upon easing of Covid restrictions, next spring, to think about larger get together of harbour users for example in the ocean room at the pavilion.

JP – Responded, careful of constituencies, might be free for all? Perhaps section down to a smaller scale, angling club for instance for location, perhaps 40-50 so everyone can be heard. Also suggested a representative from the Working Harbours Association join the Harbour Consultative Group to help spread information to other groups. Suggested involvement from police to include everyone.

DB – Suggested the Harbour Watch Panel (Currently up and running well in Poole) could be a way forward and proposed KC to lead? KC added meetings targeted on particular groups are more valuable as you can get more out of it.

JP mentioned the Working Harbours Association which had just been established and does not currently have a representative at the HCG. The group has a significant number of members. Members of the HCG discussed whether this should be re-considered. JP expressed the need for someone else to take on some work due other commitments during busy periods. It was suggested that substitutes are added to the mailing list to provide some support and to take on some of the workload.

TD - Clarification of the Working Harbours Association is needed. What is the general makeup and terms of reference? A proposal would need to be submitted to Harbours Committee with the mandate for the group, make up and cause. Are they single focus or do they support wider issues.

AC – suggested that a proposal from Working Harbours Association could be presented at a later date to allow Covid issues to ease and the new HM to settle in and get to know his surroundings. To get it started it was suggested the HM liaise with each association and discuss voice of constituency. HM requested that each association email him with dates of their meetings so that he can arrange to attend.

**Action: Associations to email dates of their meetings so the Harbour Master can arrange to attend.**

**Action: JJ to set up introductory meetings with HCG representatives and other harbour users.**

TS supported this and agreed that things should be allowed to settle with the new HM in post.

There was an overall agreement that it would be appropriate to let things settle down for a few months but to keep this topic as a live issue.

MR – Suggested either himself or another member of Harbour Committee could be present to hear views or HM could bring views to the Committee, but questioned whether people would express views more openly without a Cllr being present. The important thing is that people feel free to express their concerns openly.

JJ – At the meetings it would be important to set the scene around any issues giving some background to understand the problems and possible remedial actions. These can then be taken away and allocated to an officer to investigate within a defined timescale to report back to Committee.

A discussion was held around representative substitutes. It is now within the terms of reference, substitutes are to receive meeting agendas, previous minutes and invitations to the consultative group meetings.

Future meeting invitations and added agenda requests will be sent by Becky McGowan. The Chairman will take on future requests or questions to be added to the agenda.

On another topic, JJ mentioned that following on from the recent MCA Waste management audit, the Harbour office will be sending out questionnaires to HCG members, asking for their feedback about the facilities and assets that the harbour provides and if they feel these are adequate.

## **7. ITEMS FROM MEMBERS**

TD - 1. WSC is applying via HM to MMO for licence to extend the squib pontoon outside the clubhouse.

2. Are there any start dates or plans for start of flooding defences? Concerns over potential impact for access to WSC/WRC.

HM to apply for MMO permission to do works on lower squib pontoon. It is proposed to replace 2 piles by the lifeboat and another pile further down the river and put a pontoon on the dead water area. JJ said we are now awaiting approvals for this work from the Environment Agency and MMO, who were sent the relevant paperwork this week. They have confirmed receipt of the paperwork.

SG asked for clarification that the proposal would not block the ferry – this was confirmed.

KB – Flood defence and harbour wall works, some scoping investigative work has just started next to Nelsons Wharf and Nothe Parade, consultation will be starting soon. It will be beginning of next year before any major works start along that wall. Engineer's consultation will discuss concerns which will be passed on to Committees.

KC - 1. I would like to raise the issue of the date when the harbour goes into 'winter mode', at present September 15th. I believe this is too early to stop the 20.00 bridge and to remove harbour pontoons.

Feedback from visiting yachts has expressed it is too early to reduce access to inner and main harbour. The Harbour Master explained that the pontoons will always be removed based on predicted weather to prevent damage.

The team are considering the proposal regarding the bridge times and will come back to the HCG with further information.

## 8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

TS – Asked what was happening on the development for fishing side on peninsula?  
KB – Responded, the wider plan has recently gone through some changes, but the proposed harbour related developments are still ongoing, and plans are being developed. With the changes and effects of Covid it has delayed engagement with the architects. The original completion date was March 2021, but there is acceptance from the funder that projects are likely to have been delayed by Covid.

The RNLI shed works commenced Monday. Looking at 3-4 months before completion.

RD – Gave a police report update. There were limited calls in Weymouth but if anyone knows of incidents that have occurred, they should be reported to the police.

The Sailing Academy reported a bike stolen in October 20.

A bottle was thrown and damaged the windscreen of a charter boat tied up on the pontoon at Customs House Quay.

DB – Reported crime in Dorset throughout Covid has reduced. There is usually a spike around this time of year but feels it's due to more vessel use by owners. There had been fewer boats stolen from land and taken out of county. Theft of fuel, the latest crime was in Weymouth and jet ski issues have subsided.

AS – Asked if there was an opportunity to discuss road closures and how they have affected us.

KB- Responded, this sits within a wider consultation, highways within DC. KB is unsure of plans if any for next year. Criticism had been received due to lack of consultation on that. We will provide an update in February's meeting after speaking with highways. MR to discuss with Cllr Ray Bryan and feed through for comment.

DC – Raised a safety point regarding lack of lights on pontoons by Commercial Road.

JJ – Noted and will investigate.

Thanks were expressed by the group to AC for his commitment and hard work being the Chairman of the Group over the last few years.

## 9. DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Harbour Consultative Group - 17 February 2021

Harbours Committee – 9 December 2020, 17 March 2021