

## **HARBOURS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 8 DECEMBER 2022**

**Present:** Cllrs Mark Roberts (Chairman), Rob Hughes (Vice-Chairman), Dave Bolwell, Mary Penfold, Sarah Williams

**Independent Members:** Lee Hardy, Richard Tinsley and Philip Thicknesse

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

Lara Aintree (Senior Lawyer - Regulatory), Ken Buchan (Head of Environment and Wellbeing), Claire Connolly (Harbour Office Manager), Kate Critchel (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Joshua Kennedy (Apprentice Democratic Services Officer), Matthew Penny (Service Manager - Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM)) and James Radcliffe (Bridport and Lyme Regis Harbour Master)

**1. Apologies**

There were no apologies.

**2. Minutes**

The minutes of the Harbours Committee 28 September 2022 were noted.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Penfold declared a non-pecuniary interest as the Chairman of SCOPAC (Standing Conference on problems associated with the Coastline) and as a member of the Special Coastal Interest Group.

Cllr Roberts declared a non-pecuniary interest as the holder of a mooring at West Bay Harbour, a member of the LGA Special Interest Group – Wessex Regional Flood and Coastal Committee and Chairman of Southern IFCA.

Richard Tinsley declared a non-pecuniary interest as he holds a mooring in Weymouth Harbour.

**4. Public Participation**

There were no public questions or statements.

**5. Chairman's Report**

The committee received a verbal report from the Chairman, who outlined that this was the first meeting of the newly created Harbours Advisory Committee,

replacing the Harbours Committee. The Chairman detailed the committee's role and indicated that it would report directly to Cabinet rather than full council for decisions. This would facilitate a faster decision-making process. All Non-Key decisions would be made by the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment.

An update was also provided regarding the status of the appointment of the Harbour Master for Weymouth Harbour, with an offer having been accepted by Mr Ed Carter who would join the team shortly. He also acknowledged the work carried on the proposed fees and charges for the next season.

## **6. Harbour Consultative Group Minutes**

The minutes of the Harbour Consultative Group meetings that had taken place since the last meeting of the Harbours Committee were presented by the following Harbour Consultative Board representatives:

Lyme Regis Harbour Consultative Group (LRHCG) 06 October 2022 – Steve Postles Vice-Chairman.

Bridport (West Bay) Harbour Consultative Group (BHGC) 10 October 2022 – Simon Miles Chairman. The Harbour Master delivered a report on the Harbour Safety Scheme for Bridport.

In response to a question about expanding membership of the BHGC to non-motorised water users, the Head of Environment and Wellbeing informed the members that there was some work required to amend the terms of reference of the consultative groups and the widening of the membership could also be included in this review. He suggested that a report be brought back to the next meeting of the committee with appropriate proposals.

Weymouth Harbour Consultation Group (WHCG) 17 November 2022 – Cllr Roberts referred the committee to the written minutes for this meeting which were contained with the agenda papers.

## **7. Harbour Master Updates**

The Bridport Harbour Master delivered updates on the Lyme Regis and West Bay harbours. The Harbour Master discussed the statistics for both harbours and compared these to last year's data. The committee also were made aware of the ongoing projects being undertaken in the harbours, including maintenance on two pontoons and dredging work, which was set to be completed by March/April 2023. There were also plans for a future project in Bridport Harbour, to develop an area of land near the West Pier for better usage. The Harbour Master concluded by highlighting the full calendar of events for 2023.

Concerns were expressed about the impact that any potential delays in conducting the dredging work in the harbours would have on local businesses, particularly if the work was delayed into the seasonal summer period. The Service Manager for Flood and Coastal Erosion reassured the

committee that the dredging work was set to be completed by March 2023 and Lyme Regis was set to be completed first and then West Bay to minimise disruption to local businesses.

The Assistant Weymouth Harbour Master delivered the update on Weymouth Harbour to the committee, noting the important statistics for this year compared to the previous years and gave reasonings for any notable differences. The committee were updated on the successful completion of works involving the Town Bridge, during which there were very few complaints and no damage to any vessels. He then went over the works being undertaken in Weymouth Harbour, in particular the monitoring of the condition of the Pier handrails and the replacement of Pier lights, which have recently failed, as well as general rolling maintenance.

In response to questions from members, the Assistant Harbour Master informed the committee that they would be able to check the status of the new navigation lights from the harbour office and that they can use an online system for identifying missing or faulty buoys. The Assistant Harbour Master also advised that works on the other side of the bridge were set to be completed by April 2023 and so far, just one side of the bridge had been completed. In response to a question on incident reporting, the Harbour Office Manager confirmed that that all incidents were logged in a single place and responded to.

The committee noted the updates.

#### **8. Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Engineering Update**

The Service Manager for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management delivered an update on the FCERM for Lyme Regis, West Bay and Weymouth harbours. Regarding Lyme Regis, key issues were covered, including inspections at Lyme Regis, ongoing repairs, and the approval of the Lyme Regis Environmental Recruitment Scheme. A similar update was provided for West Bay and the committee was informed of the risk-based approach that was being taken regarding dredging, to minimise disruption to the tourism industry. Inspections were completed for West Bay, with defects being identified and repairs were ongoing. The Service Manager outlined the work being done on Weymouth Harbour, with flood risk surveys, a dredging survey and inspections for repairs all being carried out.

A concern was expressed over whether the surface of the Pier would be suitable for the installation of new hand railings, however the Service Manager reassured members that new handrails would only be installed into a secure structure, such as concrete.

The committee noted the FCERM update.

#### **9. Harbours Budget Monitoring Report 2022-23**

The Harbour Office Manager delivered an update to the committee on the Harbours Budget Monitoring Report 2022/23, the purpose of which was to set out the current budget monitoring position for the harbour operational budgets for Weymouth, Bridport and Lyme Harbours at the end of August 2022 and the predicted position of the Harbour Reserves for 2022/23.

The committee were informed that the budget monitoring for Weymouth was an improving picture, in part due to an increase in income related to filming projects occurring in the area, while there are also the usual cost pressures, such as increasing energy costs.

The Bridport Harbour Master explained that there had been increased costs in fuel and transport, as well as services and materials, leading to increased dredging costs. However, there had been increased income from diving revenue and car parking.

In response to questions on shop sales and the fuel usage of vehicles, the Harbour Master advised that the sales figures were from shops located in the harbour and that the JCB's had been using white diesel for some time, however this had recently increased in cost.

One committee member asked what measures were being taken regarding seeking energy saving costs on upcoming projects, to which the Harbour Office Manager assured the committee that they were in the process of bidding for funds to install solar panels on their buildings and were looking at other energy saving measures that could be undertaken.

### **Decision**

That the budget monitoring position 2022/23 for Weymouth Harbour, Bridport Harbour and Lyme Regis Harbour be noted.

## **10. Harbours Budget and Setting of Fees and Charges 2023/2024**

The committee received a report from the Harbour Office Manager on the proposed fees and charges for 2023/24 as set out in the report. It was explained that the proposed fees and charges had been decided after completing benchmarking against other harbours, who offer similar services. Dorset Council's recommended increase of 5% was used as a starting point and any exceptions to this had been listed in the report with explanations as to why this was the case.

In response to a question from one member of the committee, the Head of Environment and Wellbeing explained that the asset management plan for Bridport and Lyme Regis would be coming to the committee in the forward plan for March 2023.

Recommendation to Cabinet

That Cabinet asks Full Council to:

1. Approve the fees and charges for 2023/2024 for Weymouth Harbour

2. Approve the Asset Management Plan for 2023/24 for Weymouth Harbour
3. Approve the fees and charges for 2023/24 for Bridport and Lyme Regis
4. Approve the budget request for 2023/24 for Weymouth Harbour
5. Approve the budget request for 2023/24 for Bridport Harbour
6. Approve the budget request for 2023/24 for Lyme Regis Harbour

11. **Approval of the Harbours Marine Safety Plan and update on Port Marine Safety Code Audit Actions**

The Head of Environment and Wellbeing delivered a follow up report to the PMSC (Port Marine Safety Code) Designated Person Report 2022 from the Harbours Committee on 28 September 2022, providing a progress update against the actions decided at the previous committee and a draft Marine Safety Plan for approval.

The committee were informed that progress was positive, with many of the actions having been completed or being close to completion, while some actions were set to be completed early 2023, such as a pilotage review for Bridport. The new Designated Person would be responsible for assessing the Safety Management system in early 2023 to confirm its compliance. It was explained that a small working group was put together to draft the Marine Safety Plan, as set out in the PMSC, to decide the key objectives, who was responsible for delivering these and the time scale of those objectives. The Marine Safety Plan would be assessed and reported upon at regular intervals, to the Harbours Advisory Committee and the Portfolio Holder as duty holder.

The Chairman thanked the working group for their involvement of the drafting of the Marine Safety Plan and added that a review of the plan should be added to the standing items on the forward plan for each meeting.

The Portfolio Holder for Highways, Environment and Travel confirmed that he agreed to approve the Marine Safety Plan.

Recommendation to the Portfolio Holder

That the Marine Safety Plan be approved.

[Decision of the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Environment - Approval of the Harbours Marine Safety Plan - Dorset Council](#)

**Decision**

That the progress on the actions related to the Port Marine Safety Code audit be noted.

That a review of the Marine Safety Plan be added to the Forward Plan as a standing item.

12. **Forward Plan**

The forward plan was presented by the Head of Environment and Wellbeing, who noted the inclusion of an asset management plan for Bridport and Lyme Regis, in addition to the standing items in the forward plan. A communications plan was proposed to be brought to the Committee in March 2023, in order to build relationships with suppliers, stakeholders and users.

The following two items set to be on the agenda for March 2023 had been pushed back to June 2023, to allow the new Harbour Master to provide input for these items.

New General Directions for Weymouth Harbour  
Harbours Business Plan

He further noted that the terms of reference for the consultative groups would be brought forward for the next committee meeting. Along with the standing item in respect to the Marine Safety Code.

The Chairman also requested for the change of James Radcliffe's title from Interim Harbour Master to Harbour Master, following his permanent appointment to the position. There were no further amendments.

**13. Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

**14. Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

**Duration of meeting:** 10.00 - 11.29 am

**Chairman**

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