

HARBOURS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2023

Present: Cllrs Mark Roberts (Chairman), Rob Hughes (Vice-Chairman), Dave Bolwell, Louie O'Leary, Sarah Williams

Independent Members Present: Mark Saxby, Richard Tinsley and Philip Thicknesse

Also Present Remotely: Cllr Ray Bryan

Apologies: Cllr Mary Penfold and Lee Hardy

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

Lara Altree (Senior Lawyer - Regulatory), Ken Buchan (Head of Environment and Wellbeing), Ed Carter (Weymouth Harbour Master), Claire Connolly (Harbour Office Manager), Kate Critchel (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Anna Eastgate (Corporate Director - Place Services), Kevin Evans (Senior Accountant (Place)), Joshua Kennedy (Apprentice Democratic Services Officer), Matthew Penny (Service Manager - Flood & Coastal Erosion) and James Radcliffe (Bridport and Lyme Regis Harbour Master)

28. Minutes

In response to a question, the Weymouth Harbour Master confirmed that the Marine Safety Plan had been updated to reflect the latest audit findings and the development of the incident and accident reporting system and this would be provided at the next meeting of the committee in March 2024.

The minutes were confirmed and signed.

29. Declarations of Interest

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.

30. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

31. Chairman's Report

The Chairman delivered a verbal update to the committee and welcomed the new independent co-optee, Mark Saxby, who's appointment had been confirmed at the last Full Council meeting. He also thanked the officers of all three harbours for their work in keeping harbour users safe during recent storms.

32. Harbour Consultative Group Minutes

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

Bridport (West Bay) Harbour Consultative Group 16 October 2023 – Simon Miles Group Chairman.

Lyme Regis Harbour Consultative Group 05 October 2023 – Nick Marks Group Chairman.

Weymouth Harbours Consultative Group 11 October 2023 – Andy Sargent Group Chairman.

33. Harbour Master Updates

The Bridport Harbour Master delivered the update for Bridport and Lyme Regis Harbours, providing the latest statistics, he noted that the reason for the lower-than-expected statistics was due to adverse weather. There had been some accidents and incidents in the harbours, resulting from the recent storms, however these had been dealt with and reported, while events held in the harbours had been well attended.

In response to a question, the Harbour Master noted that the likely cause of one incident was due to excess pressure on the mooring rope of a vessel from the storm, causing the vessel to break free from its moorings.

The Weymouth Harbour Master presented the update for Weymouth Harbour and noted that the statistics reflect the time of year and adverse weather in comparison to last year, however mooring occupancy remained strong. There were several incidents since the last committee meeting, particularly due to the storm, including a partially sunken vessel and these had been recorded. The consultation on the powers of general direction was now coming to a close and this would be ready to be presented to the committee at the next meeting. Works on the harbour walls and pleasure pier were also underway.

In response to questions from members the Weymouth Harbour Master explained that the cause of the partially sunken vessel was due to modifications made by the owner, which caused the vessel to take on water earlier than the original hull design specification during the recent storm. The Harbour Team also assisted in dealing with the incident and worked with the owner to recover the vessel, as part of the service provided by the Harbour. He also noted that as part of their ongoing duties, the Harbour Team attempt to identify vessels, which are abandoned or

coming to the end of their lifespan to try and deal with them as abandoned vessels can cause expense to the Harbour in disposing of them.

The committee noted the updates from the Harbour Masters.

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

The Service Manager for Flood & Coastal Erosion provided an engineering update for the harbours. Dredging was still scheduled to be completed on time in West Bay and Lyme Regis harbours, however it was heavily dependent on the weather conditions and annual inspections had taken place across the three harbours to identify areas of maintenance and repair. Inspections had also looked at damage from the recent storms and determined that limited damage to the harbours had occurred.

In Lyme Regis the Cobb had undergone repair work and was being monitored and the Environmental Improvement Scheme Phase 5 had a funding shortfall and work was ongoing to bridge the funding gap.

In Weymouth Harbour the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Scheme Phase 1 was also facing budgetary pressures with a funding gap for the delivery of the scheme. Works to harbour walls F and G were expected to begin by Autumn 2024 and work to the pleasure pier had been successfully completed.

In response to member discussion the Service Manager for Flood & Coastal Erosion confirmed he would be able to work with the Harbour Masters to provide an annual update to the committee of a review of risks related to harbour walls.

The Weymouth Harbour Master also noted that they have regular meetings with the Coast Risk Team to review ongoing maintenance and repairs.

The committee noted the FCERM engineering update.

35. Harbours Budget Monitoring Report 2023/24

The budget monitoring figures for 2023/24 for Bridport and Lyme Regis were presented by the Bridport Harbour Master, who stated that for Bridport there had been some overspend, due to supplies, services and unanticipated parking management fees. There had also been a surplus of income generated by car parks. In Lyme Regis there had been a minor overspend due to employee costs and any budget surplus was set to be returned to Dorset Council.

The budget monitoring figures for Weymouth were presented by the Harbour Office Manager, who explained that there had been a reduced income from visiting commercial vessels, however this was now an improving picture. There were also savings made on business rates and seasonal staff.

The committee noted the budget monitoring figures for Bridport, Lyme Regis and Weymouth harbours for 2023/24.

36. Dorset Harbours 5 Year Business Plan

The Dorset Harbours 5 Year Business Plan was presented by the Weymouth Harbour Master, he explained that it had been developed in line with Dorset Harbours Strategy, which had been adopted in March 2022 following significant consultation with harbour users.

Having discussed the Harbours 5 Year Business Plan the committee agreed that it would provide a good strategy going forward to guide the direction of the Harbours.

Proposed by Cllr Bolwell and seconded by Cllr O’Leary.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

That Cabinet approve the adoption of the Dorset Harbours 5 Year Business Plan.

37. Harbours Budget and Setting of Fees and Charges 2024/2025

The Bridport Harbour Master presented the updated fees and charges and budget forecast for 2024/25 for Bridport and Lyme Regis Harbours. It was explained that the proposed fees and charges had been increased broadly in line with the recommendation from Dorset Council of 5%. The fees and charges had been benchmarked against other similarly sized harbours in the area to ensure they were in line with other harbours.

The Weymouth Harbour Master delivered the updated fees and charges and budget forecast for Weymouth Harbour, also noting that they had been benchmarked against other harbours so that any price increases reflect the service that was on offer.

Proposed by Cllr Williams and seconded by Cllr Bolwell.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

That Cabinet ask Full Council to:

1. Approve fees and charges for 2024/25 for Bridport and Lyme Regis Harbours.
2. Approve fees and charges for 2024/25 for Weymouth Harbour.
3. Approve the budget for 2024/25 for Bridport Harbour.
4. Approve the budget for 2024/25 for Lyme Regis Harbour.
5. Approve the budget for 2024/25 for Weymouth Harbour.

38. Forward Plan

The forward plan was presented by the Head of Environment and Wellbeing, in addition to the standing items, the consultation on General Directions for Weymouth Harbour and the Levelling Up Fund Project were expected to be brought to the meeting in March 2024. A new standing item reviewing the risks

related to harbour walls would be added as an annual item, following comments from the committee.

39. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

40. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 11.30 am

Chairman

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