

HARBOURS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 2025

Present: Cllrs Sarah Williams (Vice-Chair), Sally Holland, Lee Hardy, M Roberts, Mark Saxby and Richard Tinsley

Apologies: Cllrs Rob Hughes, Mike Baker, Ray Bryan and Peter Dickenson

Also present: Cllr Belinda Bawen

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

Lara Altree (Senior Lawyer - Regulatory), Ed Carter (Weymouth Harbour Master), Claire Connolly (Harbours Business Manager), Kevin Evans (Senior Accountant (Place)), Joshua Kennedy (Democratic Services Officer), Matthew Penny (Service Manager - Flood & Coastal Erosion), Matthew Piles (Corporate Director - Strategic Director - Weymouth 2040), James Radcliffe (Bridport and Lyme Regis Harbour Master) and Louis Wicks (Democratic Services Officer Apprentice)

124. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting held on 11 June 2025 were confirmed and signed.

125. Declarations of Interest

Richard Tinsley declared that he held a berth at Weymouth marina.

Mark Roberts declared that he held a berth in West Bay.

126. Public Participation

There were no public questions.

127. Chairman's Report

The Vice-chair delivered a verbal update, on behalf of the Chair. She welcomed two new members of staff to the harbours team and congratulated Weymouth Harbour on hosting the Santa Maria and Waverley. She also noted the excellent work of the Weymouth and Portland Litter Recycling team.

128. Harbour Consultative Group Minutes

The committee noted the minutes of the Weymouth Harbour Consultative Group meeting held on 20 August 2025.

129. **Designated Person Update**

The Harbours Manager presented the Designated Person Update, as James Hannon, the Designated Person, was unable to attend the meeting. He noted that all three harbours had been audited over the past 3 years and found to be compliant with the Port Marine Safety Code. In the most recent audit, at Lyme Regis, three areas of best practice were identified, while 15 observations were made relating to improvements, which were now being implemented.

In response to a comment from a member, the Harbours Manager stated that a report detailing compliance across the 3 harbours would be brought to the December meeting of the committee.

130. **Harbour Master Updates**

The updates for Bridport and Lyme Regis harbours were delivered by the Harbour Master. He provided the latest statistics for each harbour and noted the recent courses that had been completed by harbour staff. In Bridport the Black Hut was set to be renovated and the new building would include a small refreshments kiosk and changing facility for swimmers. In Lyme Regis the new fuel delivery service had started and delivered over 3000 litres of fuel. Newsletters had also been launched for both harbours to keep harbour users informed.

In response to a question from one member, the Harbour Master stated that the Harbour Office was being monitored by Dorset Council's Property Services to ensure it remained safe to use.

The Harbours Manager presented the update for Weymouth Harbour. He provided the statistics for Weymouth Harbour including mooring occupancy levels. He reported that since the last meeting 40 incidents had occurred in the harbour and had been recorded in the incident reporting system. There had been one oil spill incident since the last meeting, which had occurred due to a faulty light in a delivery vehicle that had resulted in a spray of oil being released, however the spill was limited and external notification wasn't required. The Harbours Manager provided details of the Harbour Revision Order, the 'Love Your Harbour' campaign and the Weymouth & Portland Marine Litter recycling facility. It was explained that HRMC had now given their approval for the sale of diesel from the fuel pontoon.

In response to questions the Harbours Manager provided the following responses:

- Speeding incidents were recorded under by-law offences within the incident recording system and there had been one instance recorded since the last meeting.
- The fuel pontoon was currently restricted to selling diesel for the time being, as the requirements for storing petrol were more restrictive.
- It was understood that the Litter Free Dorset campaign would be rolled out to the other harbours in the future.

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

The FCERM Service Manager delivered the engineering update for Bridport, Lyme Regis and Weymouth harbours.

Dredging operations for both West Bay and Lyme Regis were being carried out as a combined effort. The team was also exploring new dredging methods, including Water Injection Dredging, which was scheduled for trial implementation after the summer holiday period.

Inspections and repairs in all three harbours were ongoing. Due to limited funding, repairs with health and safety issues associated were being prioritised.

Work on Harbour Walls A and B in Bridport, was being treated as a single project, with Wall B requiring more urgent attention. Full construction work on both walls was expected to begin in autumn 2025.

In Lyme Regis a significant defect had been identified, and it required repair before the commencement of the Lyme Regis Environmental Improvement Scheme Phase 5. The project team was awaiting feedback from the Environment Agency regarding funding allocations for the scheme. Additionally, DEFRA had launched a consultation on a new flood investment framework, set to begin in April 2026, which may offer Dorset Council an opportunity to secure further government funding to bridge the gap. The project team was also engaged in ongoing discussions with Historic England to obtain pre-application advice on the outline design.

In Weymouth DEFRA had initiated a consultation on reforming the approach to flood funding, introducing a new Floods Investment Framework that was expected to come into effect from April 2026. Dorset Council was currently evaluating how these changes might impact the scheme's development and delivery.

Regarding Harbour Walls F and G on the Peninsula, the contractor had been appointed following a successful tender process. However, the formal start date for the contract is contingent upon the approval of a Marine Licence. It was also confirmed during the meeting that a Wildlife Licence would no longer be necessary.

In response to questions from members the Service Manager stated that budgetary considerations were being taken into account when applying for funding and the position was being managed as best as possible. In addition, they could consider including more financial information in the future.

132. Harbours Budget Monitoring Report 2025-26

The Harbour Business Manager presented the budget monitoring report for Bridport, Lyme Regis and Weymouth harbour. Bridport was currently forecast to have an improved surplus, which was partly due to a vacant post. In Lyme Regis there was no variance projected and there was an overspend forecasted on salary costs, due to a higher than expected pay award. In Weymouth the projected surplus was expected to be higher than budgeted, however this could primarily be attributed to higher parking income, due to the delay in the planned works to harbour Walls F & G.

The committee noted the budget monitoring report.

133. **Monitoring and review of the Marine Safety Plan**

The Harbours Manager presented the Marine Safety Plan report and he noted that the three harbours were compliant with the Port Marine Safety Code.

In response to comments from members, the Harbours Manager confirmed that a more structured review of the Marine Safety Plan could be introduced going forward and that the Designated Person could provide a more detailed review at a future meeting.

134. **Dorset Harbours Economic Review**

The Harbours Manager presented the report for the Dorset Harbours Economic Review. Due to significant changes in the economic landscape over the past several years, it was considered necessary to undertake a comprehensive economic review and an external company would be sought to carry out the work.

The Harbours Manager confirmed that a small working group, made up of committee members, could be arranged to provide guidance to officers during the process.

135. **Forward Plan**

The Harbours Manager confirmed that in addition to the standing items, the next committee meeting would include a report on the economic analysis of the harbours and the PMSC annual report.

136. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

137. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 11.29 am

Chairman

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