

Following convergence of the predecessor county, district and borough authorities in April, we now have a new Council and a new Harbours Committee covering all Dorset Council's Harbours. As part of our new programme of work, the Committee will be developing a harbours strategy in consultation with Harbour users over the next 6-8 months. This will outline our vision for Weymouth, Bridport and Lyme Regis Harbours over the next 10 years.

With regard to Weymouth Harbour, the local authority has been responsible for its management for the best part of 500 years since Weymouth and Melcombe Regis were united, so we have an immense wealth of experience.

The Weymouth Quay Regeneration Project is an opportunity for investment in to the harbour and to review some of the operations to set us up for the future. The current engagement is not about the wider peninsula development which is currently on hold.

The plans presented at the Engagement meetings were conceptual. The committee is in the process of considering feedback from the engagement events, so at this stage we are unable to specify what modifications may be made. However, we are aware of the concerns some businesses have around the harbour and will consider these carefully in the context of the wider harbour operations and the considerable benefits these businesses generate to the local economy.

With regard to consultation, there have been mechanisms and opportunities in place for a number of years for harbour users to engage in the affairs of the harbour including via the Harbour Consultative Group and in response to the e-news dissemination of the Harbour Management Board/Harbours Committee meetings papers and Minutes.

The proposals being put forward for the Weymouth Quay Regeneration are partly based on the Fisher Associates report and on the consultants' experience of working with a number of harbours in the UK and after consultation locally with Weymouth harbour users and quayside businesses

Any proposals for charter boat operations in the harbour are only at the concept stage. The concept has been shared with members of the Harbour Consultative Group and at the recent Engagement meetings. At this time, no decisions have been made, but it is expected decisions will be forthcoming early in the new year.

I can assure you that any proposals you have offered now or in the future will be fully taken into account in the formation of the plans for Weymouth Harbour.