

Harbour Advisory Committee

20 September 2023

Bridport & Lyme Regis Harbours Pilotage Review

For Recommendation to the Portfolio Holder

Portfolio Holder: Cllr R Bryan, Highways, Travel and Environment

Local Councillor(s): All Councillors

Executive Director: J Sellgren, Executive Director of Place

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Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

Bridport & Lyme Regis Harbour Authority is a Competent Harbour Authority within the meaning of the Pilotage Act 1987 which states that “*Each Competent Harbour Authority shall keep under consideration ...whether any, and if so, what pilotage services need to be provided to secure the safety of the ships navigating in or in the approaches to its harbour*”.

Dorset Council (Bridport & Lyme Regis Harbours) contracted ABP Mer Marine Consultants Limited to review the pilotage provisions of the Bridport & Lyme Regis Competent Harbour Authority and to assess the requirements for pilotage in order to determine whether a Pilotage Function Removal Order would be beneficial.

Since 2019 there have been several significant changes at Bridport and Lyme Regis including a change in trade and facilities within the Harbour, a new Council / Duty Holder, modernisation of legislation (HRO) and a change in personnel, all of which have been reflected in the updated and continuously reviewed

navigation risk assessments and Marine Safety Management System for the harbour pilotage provision.

Currently Bridport and Lyme Regis Harbours do not operate as a CHA under the requirements of the 1987 Pilotage Act.

Recommendation:

Considering the current and expected future traffic profile of Bridport and Lyme Regis Harbours, and the result of the formal navigation risk assessment, the following recommendations are made to Bridport and Lyme Regis Harbours:

1. Commence the process of removing the Harbour Authority's Pilotage functions, as provided for under The Marine Navigation Act 2013.

Reason for Recommendation:

There has been no requirement for pilotage services at Bridport and Lyme Regis harbours for many years. The use of both harbours has changed significantly to small commercial and leisure craft use. The review has concluded that the harbours are low risk and there are adequate controls in place to mitigate the safe arrival and departure of vessels, therefore the requirement for ongoing pilotage is unnecessary.

1. Report

- 1.1 The review noted there had been no Pilot requests for approximately 40 years for Bridport Harbour or 50 years for Lyme Regis Harbour.
- 1.2 The fact that no pilotage acts have been carried out for years has meant that the Harbour Authority is now unable to meet the obligations of the Pilotage Act 1987 and the recommendations of the Port Marine Safety Code in respect of pilotage. Namely that the service should be provided through the assessment and management of authorised pilots. To enable this to be achieved, the pilotage service must "have sufficient pilotage work to maintain their skills adequately". (PMSC Guide to Good Practice, s9.4.5, 2017).
- 1.3 The types of vessels visiting the Harbour are now predominantly smaller fishing and leisure craft which are below the 50-metre length threshold set for mandatory pilotage.
- 1.4 In accordance with its statutory obligations to keep pilotage services under review, the council has undertaken a comprehensive review of its port

navigation risk assessment and completed a pilotage service review which included:

- a) A review of current documentation and relevant national and local legislation
- b) A risk assessment to determine the continued need for a pilotage service.
- c) An analysis of the methods and options for delivering a pilotage service, if considered required

- 1.5 The pilotage service review concluded that the Harbour is “low risk” and that there were already adequate controls in place to mitigate the safe arrival and departure of the vessels which now use the Harbour without the need to embark a pilot.
- 1.6 The Harbour has assessed the Local Port Service following this review and is in the process of enhancing the provisions of this service in 2024 by integrating the following technology into the daily operations:
 - AIS monitoring.
 - CCTV installation covering Bridport and Lyme Regis, Harbour Entrances.
 - Weather station at Harbour, which is displayed on the website, providing data on tidal information both predicted and actual, wind speed and direction, pressure, and temperature.
 - Updated digital VHF equipment.
- 1.7 The Harbour will make use of the new Harbour Revision Order once in place to formulate General Directions, which would become enforceable when pilotage ceases.
- 1.8 The Harbour will continue with its duty to review the navigational risk assessment and keep under review the need for pilotage should the traffic profile of the Harbour change.
- 1.9 The Pilotage Service Review also concluded that there was insufficient demand to enable pilots to maintain their skills nor to train new pilots to the required standard. The council notes that this is likely to fall short of the

guidance in the Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC) Guide to Good Practice which requires pilots to undertake “sufficient pilotage work to maintain their skills adequately”.

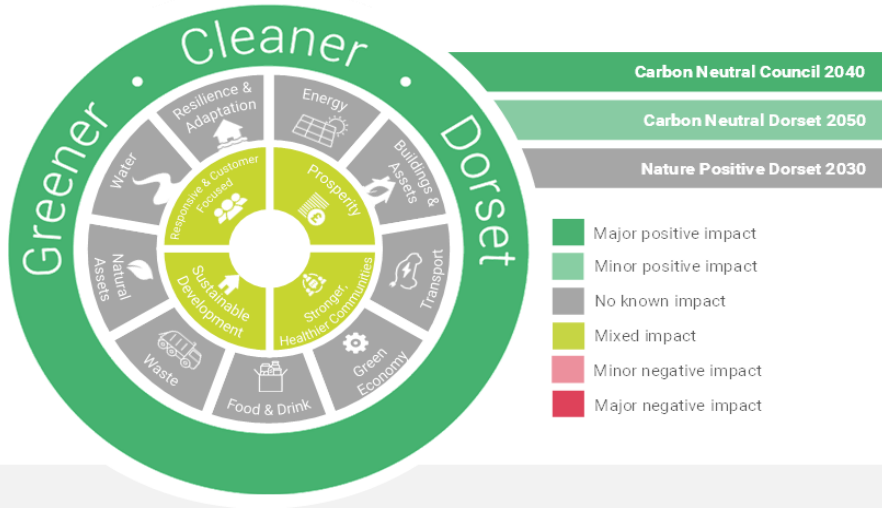
- 1.10 The removal of pilotage functions from Competent Harbour Authority (CHA), relieves the harbour of their powers and duties relating to pilotage under the 1987 Act. A harbour authority from which such functions were removed would cease to be a CHA but would continue to be a Statutory Harbour Authority (SHA). SHAs have a responsibility, placed on the Harbour Master, to ensure navigation and safety within harbour limits and have powers to issue general or specific directions to control the movement of vessels.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 The cost to the Harbour authority if they had to provide a pilotage service would be substantial where a service is not required.
 - a) Costs associated with employing a pilot. (FTE – average salary £38 000 - £50 000)
 - b) Provision and costs of simulation training for the licenced, and any trainee, pilots.
 - c) Costs of drawing up processes and keeping the pilotage service under review.

3. Natural Environment, Climate and Ecological Implications

- 3.1 There are no implications arising from this report.



Quantitative Impact on CEE targets (if known)		
	Unit	Number of units (+/-)
2030 - Natural asset extent & condition	Ha	0
2040 - Operational Emissions	CO ₂ (tonnes)	0

4. **Well-being and Health Implications**

None

5. **Other Implications**

- 5.1 Harbour issues are subject to regular consultation with customers, the Harbour Consultative Groups, and the Harbours Committee.

6. **Risk Assessment**

- 6.1 HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

Taking the findings of the review into account a comprehensive set of enhanced control measures have been identified and the Harbour Authority is satisfied that the removal of the Pilotage Service would not significantly affect the level of risk once the measures are implemented.

It should be understood that the removal of the pilotage service does not affect the harbour's standing as a statutory harbour authority.

7. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

8. **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Bridport Harbour Pilotage Review 2023

Appendix 2: Lyme Regis Harbour Pilotage Review 2023

Appendix 3: Accessible Impact Assessment Bridport & Lyme Regis Harbours

9. **Background Papers**

Nil

