

HARBOURS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2026

Present: Cllr Rob Hughes (Chair), Cllr Sarah Williams (Vice-Chair), Cllr Peter Dickenson, Cllr Sally Holland, Lee Hardy, Mark Roberts and Richard Tinsley

Apologies: Cllr Mike Baker, Cllr Ray Bryan (in attendance remotely) and Mark Saxby

Also present: Cllrs Jon Andrews, Belinda Bawden

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)

153. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mark Saxby, Cllr Mike Baker and Cllr Ray Bryan (in attendance online).

154. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting held on 03 December were confirmed and signed.

155. Declarations of Interest

Mark Roberts declared that he held a mooring at West Bay Harbour.

156. Public Participation

There were no public questions.

157. Chairman's Report

The Chair delivered a verbal report to the committee. He noted that the Harbour Revision Order (HRO) covering all three harbours had been approved, bringing harbour legislation up to date and strengthening the ability to manage the harbours effectively. He thanked all those involved in the process over the past 5 years.

158. Harbour Consultative Group Minutes

The Bridport Harbour Consultative Group minutes from the meeting held on 02 February 2026 were presented by the Group Chair Emma Bourne.

The Lyme Regis Harbour Consultative Group minutes from the meeting held on 05 February 2026 were presented by the Group Chair Sally Holman.

The Weymouth Harbour Consultative Group minutes from the meeting held on 11 February 2026 were presented by the Group Chair Tim Day.

In response to a question, officers confirmed that the Health and Safety Executive had been informed of the incident that had occurred in Lyme Regis and was being investigated.

The minutes of the Harbour Consultative Groups were noted by the committee.

159. **Harbour Master Updates**

The Bridport and Lyme Regis Harbour Master delivered the updates for Bridport and Lyme Regis harbours. The most recent statistics for both harbours were provided, it was noted that they were broadly comparable with the previous year's.

Both harbours had secured funding through the Fisheries and Seafood Scheme to support key equipment replacements; these funds would contribute towards the replacement of the quayside davits at Bridport and the fishermen's crane at Lyme Regis. Flood barriers had been installed in Bridport

Recent storms had caused approximately 10,000 tonnes of material to be deposited within Bridport harbour, a crane was used to remove some of this material, in order to maintain access into the harbour. In Lyme Regis, storms washed material off of the beach and onto the Cobb and harbour, requiring contractors to remove the materials.

Further Water Injection Dredging trials had been commissioned, as it was determined that adverse weather conditions had impacted the previous trials in November.

An incident in Bridport was reported of a vessel sinking, the vessel was successfully refloated the same day by the harbour team.

In response to a question, the Harbour Master confirmed that the cost for refloating the vessel was borne by the vessel owner.

The Harbours Manager presented the update for Weymouth Harbour. He noted that there was increasing popularity for 6-month mooring lettings, while interest in large vessel berths remained strong.

Several storms had occurred over the winter period, however the harbour had not seen any major damage to infrastructure or vessels. The Christmas Day swim had been impacted by adverse weather conditions and the event was called off after it was clear that even experienced swimmers were struggling with the conditions.

13 incidents had occurred since the last meeting and there had been no oil spills in the harbour in the same period. Oil spill response exercises were planned for later in the year, to ensure training was up to date.

Planned harbour works included repairs to the Cosens Quay car park and the replacement of Stone Pier railings, due to some severe signs of rust in places, the work to replace the damaged railings was estimated to cost £90,000, which was a saving of £100,000 when compared to the full replacement of all the railings. An in depth structural assessment of the Sand Jetty was being commissioned to determine its structural integrity.

Notable upcoming events included the introduction of the Dorset Artisan Market, which would be coming to Weymouth harbour of three separate dates in Summer 2026 and the Dorset Seafood Festival, which would return as a free to attend event. The iQFoil World Championships were set to be hosted by the Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy in September. The event would mark the first time the UK has hosted an Olympic-windsurfing world championship since 2009.

In response to members questions the Harbours Manager stated that the increasing popularity of 6-month mooring lettings was something which was being monitored in relation to the impact it may have on harbour revenue and that any 6-month agreement is purely limited to 6-months, there is no guarantee of the same berth after the 6 months end.

He also stated in response to a question about a large number of spam emails being sent to the harbour office, that IT colleagues had been consulted with and there was no risk of a security breach as the targeted email address was not connected to any secure information. They were currently working with the IT team on what steps to take going forward.

The committee noted the updates.

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

The Service Manager for Flood and Coastal Erosion delivered a verbal engineering update to the committee. The Coastal Risk Management team were supporting Bridport and Lyme Regis Harbour teams in dredging and Water Injection Dredging trials were being undertaken in both harbours.

Inspections had been undertaken in all three harbours and repairs had been scheduled with Dorset Council Highways and were expected to be completed later in the year.

In Bridport work was set to start on Wall A in Spring and Wall B in Autumn and all licences had been applied for from the Environment Agency and Marine Management Organisation.

In Lyme Regis a large void had been identified at the base of the Cobb and repair was scheduled imminently. In response to pre-application advise from Historic England, an onsite inspection of the Cobb had been arranged with key

stakeholders, in order to agree measures going forward for the Lyme Regis Phase 5 scheme. It was hoped that funding could be secured through the Community Infrastructure Levy.

In Weymouth harbour work was underway on harbour Walls F & G and it was estimated that work would be complete later in the year. A detailed design and specification document had been commissioned following a survey on harbour Wall E.

Officers provided the following responses to members questions:

- It was not anticipated that there would be disruption to activities as a result of entering the South West Flood and Coastal shared service and there will be representatives from the FCERM team on the joint committee.
- There is a risk that repairs won't be guaranteed to be completed by next year, as other factors such as adverse weather can impact repairs, however there was no indication that the work wouldn't be carried out.

It was suggested that further information about the South West Flood and Coastal shared service agreement could be provided from the relevant officer outside of the meeting.

The committee noted the FCERM updates.

161. Harbours Budget Monitoring Report 2025-26

The Harbours Business Manager delivered the budget monitoring report for all three harbours. It was noted that the pay award was higher than predicted, this was offset in Bridport by a vacant mechanics post, however there was additional costs from dredging, which resulted in the surplus reducing from what was predicted.

It was explained that in Lyme Regis a balanced budget was unlikely to be achieved, due to additional costs incurred, for example from repairing storm damage. There was currently a shortfall of approximately £14,000, which would be required to be funded from the Place directorate.

The surplus in Weymouth had increased, due to delayed repairs on the harbour walls. The new fish landing quay had created a new income stream, while there were additional costs associated with a water leak on the peninsula and the Dorset Seafood Festival.

In response to members questions officers provided the following responses:

- The Environment Agency were not providing funding for the dredging works in West Bay.
- The removal of the ramp in Weymouth was being pushed forward, now that the HRO was in place.
- The contribution from the harbour to the Dorset Seafood Festival was viewed as good value, given the boost to the local economy, including the harbour.
- Dorset Council as a whole was supporting the seafood festival, not just the Harbour Authority.

- The income from the new fish landing quay was positive.
- Different options were being explored to minimise the high charges for the electricity supply, including installing solar panels or using the old supply.

The 2025/26 budget monitoring figures and reserve balances were noted by the Harbours Advisory Committee.

162. **MCA PMSC Compliance Exercise**

The Harbours Manager introduced the MCA PMSC Compliance Exercise report and welcomed any questions.

In response to a question from one committee member, the Harbours Manager confirmed that they would check that Dorset Harbours were properly recorded on the National Database, when the Compliance Exercise closes.

The committee noted the completion of the MCA PMSC Compliance Exercise.

163. **Marine Compliance and Enforcement Policy Report**

The Harbours Manager presented the Marine Compliance and Enforcement Policy report. It was explained that the report had been brought forward as a result of an issue identified in a PMSC audit and that adoption of the policy would further help the harbours to comply with the PMSC.

Although members of the committee expressed broad support for adopting the policy there were a number of detailed comments that were asked to be addressed before recommending the policy for adoption. It was decided that these could be addressed more effectively outside of the meeting.

It was agreed that the report would be deferred to a later meeting to allow for further information to be provided.

164. **Forward Plan**

The forward plan was presented by the Harbours Manager. In addition to the usual standing items, a report on the Marine Safety Management Systems was set to be brought to the next meeting.

The Harbours Manager confirmed a more structured report on marine safety could be implemented going forward.

165. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

166. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 11.32 am

Chairman

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