

SOUTH HAMS SALCOMBE HARBOUR BOARD



Minutes of a meeting of the **South Hams Salcombe Harbour Board** held on **Monday, 17th September, 2018 at 2.30 pm** at the **Main Hall, Cliff House, Salcombe**

Present: **Councillors:**

Chairman Cllr Brazil
Vice Chairman Mr H Marriage

Ms A Jones
Mr I Stewart
Cllr Pearce
Cllr Wright

Mr M Long
Mr M Taylor
Cllr Wingate

In attendance:

Officers:
Head of Paid Service
Salcombe Harbour Master
Senior Specialist – Assets
Estuaries Officer

11. **Minutes**
SH.11/18
The minutes of the meeting of the Salcombe Harbour Board held on 16 July 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
12. **Declarations of Interest**
SH.12/18
Members were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of the meeting, and the following were made:
- Cllr Wright, Ms Jones, Mr Marriage, Mr Stewart and Mr Taylor each declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in all related agenda items by virtue of having moorings or paying harbour dues to the Council. As a result of the Solicitor granting each Board Member a dispensation, they

were all able to take part in the debate and vote on any related matters (Minute SH.3/18 above refers).

13. **Public Question Time**

SH.13/18

In accordance with the Public Question Time Procedure Rules, it was confirmed that there were no members of the public in attendance that were wishing to utilise this provision.

14. **Feedback from Harbour Community Forums**

SH.14/18

The Board received verbal update reports from those Members who attended the Harbour Community Forums. The updates were given as follows:

Salcombe Kingsbridge Estuary Conservation Forum (SKECF)

The representative advised that the next meeting of the Forum had been arranged to take place on Tuesday, 25 September 2018.

South Devon & Channel Shellfishermen

It was noted that no meetings of the Shellfishermen had been held recently. However, a positive meeting had taken place between representatives and the Harbour Master and the Shellfishermen were looking forward to the installation of the new freezer units.

Kingsbridge and Salcombe Marine Business Forum

Whilst acknowledging that the future of the high street was a national issue, the Forum had expressed a number of concerns over the trend whereby visitors were opting to utilise online national shopping sites. This growing trend was recognised by the Forum as beginning to have a real detrimental impact on the local economy.

Kingsbridge Estuary Boat Club (KEBC)

The representative advised that he had no issues to report to this meeting.

East Portlemouth

The representative advised that the Parish Council had raised some issues that were within the responsibility of the District Council and these were in the process of being followed up.

15. **Harbour Office/Workshops - Presentation Update**

By way of an update, the Senior Specialist (Assets) advised that an additional Stakeholder Workshop had been arranged to be held on the morning of Wednesday, 17 October 2018. In inviting all Board Members to attend this Workshop, it was noted that its main purpose was two-fold:

1. To provide a progress update on the last twelve months; and

2. To provide an opportunity for all stakeholders in attendance to consider the potential way forward.

During the subsequent debate, the following points were raised:-

- (a) On behalf of the Board, the Chairman emphasised that Members would not be supportive of any future proposals that were deemed to be detrimental to the Harbour;
- (b) A representative advised that some local concerns had been expressed over the Batson Marine Units potentially being unaffordable for local businesses and, such was the strength of view, that this consideration must be borne in mind. In addition, another representative stated the importance of imposing a legal covenant to ensure that units were maintained for the purpose of maritime business. It was felt that such a covenant would prevent permission from being granted to change the use of these units.

16. **2019/20 Fees and Charges**

SH.16/18

Members were presented with a report that recommended approval of the proposed Fees and Charges for the 2019/20 Financial Year.

In discussion, a Member expressed his view that elements of the proposed fees and charges were unduly detrimental to local residents. It was the belief of the Member that any increases in fees and charges should be targeted more towards visitors to the harbour than local residents. The Member proceeded to highlight his deep frustration that the Board had found itself in exactly the same dilemma as it had done twelve months ago at its meeting on 25 September 2017 (Minute SH.17/17 refers). In particular, the Member reminded those in attendance that, despite guarantees being made last year that a Board Workshop 'would be scheduled well in advance of this meeting to enable for informal (and detailed) consideration of the proposed fees and charges for 2019/20', this request had not been met.

Other Board Members had sympathy with some of the views expressed. However, when considering that the Harbour Master had only recently been appointed, coupled with the proposals being consistent with the approach taken by the Board in recent years, the majority concluded that they should be recommended for approval this year.

However, in recognition of the concerns expressed, an additional recommendation was **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED** and on being put to the vote was declared **CARRIED**:-

'That, for 2020/21 and beyond, a Framework to review Fees and Charges be put in place. Specifically for 2020/21, this will commence with a Board Workshop on 19 November 2018, with the review being completed before the end of April 2019.'

It was then:

RESOLVED

1. That Council be **RECOMMENDED** that the proposed Fees and Charges be approved for implementation (to come into effect from 1 April 2019); and
2. That, for 2020/21 and beyond, a Framework to review Fees and Charges be put in place. Specifically for 2020/21, this will commence with a Board Workshop on 19 November 2018, with the review being completed before the end of April 2019.

(NOTE: in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.6, Cllr S A E Wright requested that his vote against part 1 of the recommendation be formally recorded).

17. **2019/20 Budget**

SH.17/18

The Board considered a report that proposed that the Salcombe Harbour Authority Budget for 2019/20 be recommended to the Council for approval.

In discussion, reference was made to:-

- (a) the increased premises cleaning charges. In recognising that the budgetary increase reflected the wish to improve the standard of the facilities, it was agreed that the issue of the public conveniences should be subject of a future Workshop session. To signify the fact that Salcombe was a premium boating destination, Members emphasised the importance of the facilities reflecting this objective. Board Members recognised that local businesses also had a role to play in this respect and a representative confirmed that they were more than happy to be involved in discussions over future service provision;
- (b) the current approach to the annual Budget Setting process. Some of the earlier concerns in relation to considering the draft proposals earlier in the year were again reiterated and the view was expressed that the Board should be adopting a more strategic (and long-term) approach to setting its Financial Strategy. As a result, it was **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED** and when put to the vote declared **CARRIED** that:-

'The Board set out a Five Year Medium Term Financial Strategy (for the ultimate approval of the Council) that will underpin its annual Budget Setting process from 2020/21.'

- (c) the new Harbour Van. The Harbour Master confirmed that the £20,000 that was set aside in the agenda papers for a new Harbour Van was a nominal sum and he was confident that the actual purchase would be significantly less than this amount;

- (d) the proposed voluntary contribution to the Marine Infrastructure Reserve. A Member **PROPOSED** that the recommended contribution be reduced from £58,000 to £30,000. In the absence of another Member being willing to second this proposal, it was not subject to any debate;
- (e) the employee costs. A Member welcomed the amendments to the staffing structure following the last pay and grading review for Harbour staff.

It was then:

RECOMMENDED

That Council be **RECOMMENDED** that:

1. the proposed 2019/20 Budget be approved for implementation (to come into effect from 1 April 2019); and
2. the Board set out a Five Year Medium Term Financial Strategy (for the ultimate approval of the Council) that will underpin its annual Budget Setting process from 2020/21.

18. **Water Quality - Verbal Update**

SH.18/18

The Chairman welcomed the Estuaries Officer and the Environment Agency (EA) Representative to the meeting to conduct a presentation on Water Quality.

During their presentation, particular reference was made to:-

- 'water quality' had many different meanings and measures but underlined the very health of the Estuary and indeed the Harbour and required a catchment and community-wide effort to conserve and enhance it;
- the role that the Estuaries Officer played within the local community to raise an informed and active awareness of water quality matters;
- the duty of regard that the Harbour and other relevant authorities had upon them towards the Water Framework Directive;
- the vital importance of knowing our local waters and the need for timely reporting of incidents and pollution via the EA's 24/7 Emergency hotline (0800 807060);
- the water body classification. It was noted that the Harbour continued to be classified as 'Moderate' against the Water Framework Directive. This was the same as in 2009 and it was confirmed that the reasons for this classification could be found on

- the online 'Catchment Data Explorer' (<https://bit.ly/2TtItB8>);
- the UK Government had this year launched its 25-year Environment Plan. In April 2018, 'New Farming Rules for Water' had been launched and these would be regulated through the EA. In discussion, Members welcomed that this was an important change that should be welcomed;
 - budgetary pressures. Similarly to all other areas of the public sector, the Board acknowledged that the EA was having to monitor its budgets incredibly closely and that this was culminating in the organisation having to work within very tight constraints. As a consequence, the organisation recognised the value of local knowledge and was particularly keen to improve dialogue with local authorities and the Harbour Authority;
 - Brexit. The representative confirmed that every indication was that Central Government remained wholly committed to maintaining the existing environmental standards.

In the subsequent discussion, the following points were raised:-

- (a) When questioned, the representative informed that South West Water had considered the recent works that had been undertaken to separate rain water from sewage in Salcombe had been a great success;
- (b) The Board noted that a local project was underway to encourage the engagement of holidaymakers to continue their high standard of waste disposal whilst on holiday as they would at their primary residence;
- (c) All Members recognised that excess sedimentation was a significant issue in this area.

In conclusion, the Chairman thanked the Estuaries Officer and the EA representative for their informative presentation and he gave an assurance that all Members recognised the fact that water quality was a major issue for the Harbour.

19.

Harbour Master's Report - Standing Agenda Item

SH.19/18

A report was considered that updated the Board on a number of recent issues that had affected the Harbour.

In the ensuing discussion, reference was made to:-

- (a) the capsized vessel incident. A number of Members highlighted that Salcombe had gained a reputation as being a Harbour in which underage children were being put in charge of high powered vessels without wearing life jackets or kill cords. The Board emphasised the magnitude of this issue and stressed the importance of it being addressed with preventive measures being suggested that included:

- the removal of moorings;
- the need to instigate a communications campaign to educate harbour users;
- investigating whether the speeding byelaws should be revised; and
- considering whether the use of kill cords should be compulsory in the harbour.

In addition, the Board recognised that two visiting yachts had unfortunately been damaged in the incident. It was agreed that the Chairman would write to the owners of these yachts offering the sincere apologies of the Board and reassuring them that Members take this matter incredibly seriously;

- (b) revising the Moorings Policy. The Board supported a proposal that the Policy be informally reviewed at the Board Workshop on 19 November 2018. In recognition of the number of areas that the Workshop would cover, the agenda for this session was agreed as follows:-

10.00am – 11.00am: Public Conveniences;
 11.00am – 12.30pm: Moorings Policy; and
 1.15pm: Fees and Charges and Annual Budget
 Setting Process;

- (c) the Performance Indicators. The Indicators were considered to be positive and relevant to the Board and would provide a very useful barometer to compare performance trends moving forward;
- (d) a staff structure chart. An updated Harbour Authority staff structure chart was tabled to the meeting. In its consideration, a Member recorded his thanks for the work of the Head of Paid Service in listening to the concerns of the Board and reflecting these in the revised structure. Furthermore, thanks was also extended from the Board to the Harbour Master and all of the Harbour Staff for their hard work and efforts during an incredibly busy summer season.

It was then:

RESOLVED

That the report be noted and the proposals contained within it and the detailed minutes above be endorsed.

The Meeting concluded at 5.30 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
