

Minutes of the meeting of Commissioners held on Monday 20th September 2021 at 2.00pm in the Lymington Town Sailing Club

Present: Alison Towler (AT) (Acting Chair), Jane Challener (JC), Chris Lisher (CL), Andrew Richards (AR), Philip Naylor (PN), Paul Harrison (PH), Mike Bowles (MB)

Officers present: Ryan Willegers (RW) (Harbour Master & Chief Executive), Sarah Maynard (Administration Assistant)

In Attendance: N/A

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Tim Harford (TH), Bob Mitchell (BM), (LHAG) John Morrow (JM) Rupert Wagstaff (RWag)

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

2.1 There were no declarations of interests.

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (12th July 2021)

3.1 The minutes were agreed and signed by AT.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF 15th March 2021

- 4.1 Agenda Item 7.1 (Safety Review - Body Worn Cameras) – The use of Body Worn Camera's went live on the 30th July 2021. Their use was communicated via Local Notice to Mariners 12/2021.
- 4.2 Agenda Item 7.1 (Safety Review – Safety Boat Crew Training) – RW reported he had held meetings with the Royal Lymington Yacht Club and Lymington Town Sailing Club to discuss concerns about safety boat crew training following a number of incidents involving safety boats this season. Both Clubs acknowledged that there had been a hiatus in safety boat training due to Covid but were actively working on a programme of upskilling, including providing training to improve situational awareness and decision making. Progress will be reviewed in the normal way through the annual river user safety meeting.
- 4.3 Agenda Item 14.1 (Seabin) - An official launch event to mark the installation of the Seabin at Town Quay was held on the 4th August with representatives from Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and the media present. As well as receiving press coverage, Meridian TV also aired in their news programme on the 5th August. More details including the Meridian TV article are available on LHC's website. A big thank you to Jane who represented LHC.

5. COMMISSIONERS

- 5.1 AT confirmed that Bob Mitchell has confirmed that regrettably he is stepping down as a Commissioner due to ill health. Bob has served for 5 years and has made an important contribution as the chairman of the finance committee which helped ensure that LHC remains on a sound financial footing despite the challenges posed by the pandemic. AT confirmed that arrangements have been made to thank Bob for his service through the presentation of a leaving gift and drinks in the garden of the Mayflower at 12.30

the following day. AT, RW and the Treasurer will attend but all Commissioners are welcome. The Commissioners thanked BM for his service.

- 5.2 AT confirmed that CL's first three year term as a Commissioner is due to end on the 31st October 2021 and thanked CL for his service to date. In line with LHC's constitution, CL was eligible to serve a 2nd term and had indicated that he was willing to continue, subject to the support of the Commissioners. It was proposed that CL be reappointed for a second three year term.

Proposed: AR

Seconded: JM (email)

Vote: All in favour

6. LYMINGTON HARBOUR ADVISORY GROUP

- 6.1 RW reported that in line with LHAG's constitution, Rob Thompson (RT) has indicated that he was willing to serve a further term. Accordingly, his reappointment (backdated to 15th April 2021) was confirmed on the 13th July. Commissioners thanked RT for his service to the harbour.

- 6.2 RW reported that the next meeting of LHAG has been scheduled for Tuesday 19th October 2021.

7. OFFICERS REPORT

- 7.1 Operations Manager – The Operations Managers Report was noted. In relation to the dredging, AR asked if there was an update on the effect of the beneficial use programme at Boiler Marsh. RW indicated that it was working well with a significant proportion of the placed mud remaining in situ. RW indicated he would circulate the latest monitoring report (May 2021) which was produced to fulfil one of the Marine Licence conditions. **Action: RW**

- 7.2 Treasurers Report – The Treasurer's casual income report was noted. PT noted the online booking module had gone live on the 20th August but with minimal publicity to allow for a period of testing and asked when publicity might be rolled out. RW indicated that it was his preference to get some further experience with the system, both to ensure staff can familiarise and to ensure that it is working reliably as intended. RW indicated that as LHC were now moving towards the winter season and dredging programme, as well as the closure of the Town Quay washrooms for refurbishment, the moorings available for visitors will be significantly reduced, as will demand. As in previous winters, from the 1st November until mid March, the small number of rafting berths available for visitors will be on a 'first come first serve' basis as it is not practical to manage reservable berths on the winter headcount and roster arrangements. It was therefore RW's preference to publicise once the capacity for the 2022 summer season has been released. This would typically be in late November once the 2022/23 budget had been approved and the mooring committee had set next years pricing.

CL asked whether there was merit in opening up bookings for next season earlier. RW indicated there had never been demand from individuals to book so far ahead. For rally bookings it was different as many seek to book a year or more in advance and LHC had a means of reserving space without any charges being raised until nearer the time. PH wondered whether customers would start booking earlier given the 'staycation' effect seen in accommodation websites like Air BnB where people were getting themselves organised earlier. RW indicated there was no evidence of that so far. PN observed that with if the seasonal mooring demand in the Solent continues to exceed mooring availability this may be a moot point.

AT noted the recruitment of a young person for work experience under the Governments Kickstart scheme had been very successful. PN echoed that he had met Kate, who was clearly very enthusiastic about her work and feedback from other colleagues showed she was held in high regard. RW indicated that following consultation with the personnel committee, a decision had been taken to recruit a further young person under the Kickstart scheme, this time a trainee on the water post for the coming winter.

The application had just been received and recruitment through the approved job seeker channels would commence shortly.

8. SAFETY & PORT MARINE SAFETY CODE (PMSC)

8.1 Oil Spill Response Plan – RW reported that the joint Wightlink/LHC oil spill response plan for the harbour was reapproved by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency on the 9th July 2021 and is valid for 3 years. The new plan was completely rewritten on this occasion to simplify it and make it fully electronic. A paper copy is also held. The awarding of a new contract for the provision of Tier 2 response services was in the process of being reviewed. PN asked if LHC received formal oil spill response training. RW confirmed that all permanent and returning seasonal officers who work on the water are Tier 2p trained. Also, RW and the Operation Manager were also trained to Tier 4p. The Oil Spill Response Plan prescribes the minimum training and exercise requirements and these are subject to an annual declaration to the MCA.

8.2 Safety Review Meeting – RW reported that an officer safety review meeting had taken place earlier in the day to cover the period from May to August inclusive. A minute of the meeting will be circulated for consideration at the Commissioners November meeting.

PN asked if there was anything that gave cause for concern. RW explained there were two areas which had been the subject of particular focus namely the training of club safety boat crews and a serious speeding incident. On the subject of the former, there had been two near miss incidents with the ferry where the safety boat crews had not exercised sufficient situational awareness to enable incidents to be headed off before they occurred. There was also a further incident where a safety boat helm had collided with a moored yacht leading to the safety boat helm falling overboard - no injuries occurred. RW had met with both Clubs to discuss his concerns and seek assurances about training of safety boat crews. Both acknowledged that there had been a hiatus in training due to Covid but they were now working towards resolving that and upskilling.

9. AOB

9.1 There was no other business in the public session.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

10.1 The next meeting will be on Monday 20th September 2021.

End