

***Minutes of the meeting of the Commissioners held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2019 at 2.00pm in the Lymington Town Sailing Club, Bath Road, Lymington.***

**Present:** Richard Jenner (Chairman) (RJ), Bill Peach (BP), Alison Towler (AT), Jane Challener (JC), Paul Martin (PM), Andrew Richards (AR), Tim Harford (TH), Bob Mitchell (BM), Chris Lisher (CL)

**Officers present:** Ryan Willegers (RW) (Harbour Master & Chief Executive), Frances Moores (Treasurer) (FM), Sarah Maynard (SM) (Administrator)

**In Attendance:** Rupert Wagstaff (RWag) (LHAG)

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1 None

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

2.1 No interests were declared.

**3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

3.1 The minutes of the meeting of the 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019 were approved.

**4. MATTERS ARISING**

4.1 Agenda Item 4.1 (Matters Arising – Life Jacket Lockers) – RW reported that the lockers were in place and the RNLI and LHC had publicised.

**5. LYMINGTON HARBOUR ADVISORY GROUP (LHAG)**

5.1 LHAG Awareness – At their May meeting the Commissioners extended an invitation for LHAG to join LHC on its stand at the Seafood Festival on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> August 2019. RWag had circulated a reminder of the invitation to LHAG members but to date no one had indicated they were available to attend. RWag felt that the timing coinciding with the start of Cowes week had excluded himself and some other representatives.

RW reported that LHC were producing a flyer for distribution at the Seafood Festival with the aim of increasing awareness about the role of the Harbour Advisory Group and setting out their contact details. The new LHAG Chairman had also contributed to this. It is also intended to produce a display banner.

A new dedicated email address – [info@LHAG.co.uk](mailto:info@LHAG.co.uk) is in the process of being set up which the Chairman of LHAG or his/her deputy will monitor and respond to emails received. Once live, details will be published on the LHC website. **Action: RW**

It was also proposed to periodically do a short article in LHC's newsletter to increase awareness of LHAG's role and the representatives for each stakeholder group.

5.2 LHAG Attendance at LHC Meetings – RW referred to his report which set out full details of the further correspondence and consultation with LHAG in connection with the Commissioners view that continuing to invite the Chairman of LHAG (or his/her representative) to attend the 'in committee' section of Board meetings was not compatible with Ports Good Governance Guidance and should no longer continue.

This correspondence culminated in an agreement that the LHAG Chairman or his/her representative would no longer attend the 'In Committee' section of LHC Board meetings. Instead Commissioners will incorporate a standard agenda item for LHAG after the open session of the meeting where both LHAG and LHC can list matters for discussion in private before LHC move into the 'In Committee' section of the meeting. LHC have also committed to share details of the 'In Committee' agenda and, if asked, will explain why particular agenda items are listed for discussion 'In Committee'. The Commissioner have also agreed that RW would provide a verbal briefing on those discussions to the extent possible.

RWag indicated his desire to move on and reiterated that he was keen to work with the Commissioners for the good of the river.

## 6. OFFICERS REPORTS

6.1 Harbour Masters Report - Questions were invited on the items within the report that were not listed for consideration as an agenda item. No questions arose.

6.2 Operations Manager Report – RW referred to the report and commented on the visitor and temporary mooring statistics. Key points were that visiting boat numbers were down by 7.7% (May) and 11.3% (June) respectively with poorer weather this year being the main contributory factor. On the Dan Bran pontoon, larger boats also reduced numbers on weekend stays. The number of temporary moorings (Long Term Visitors) were up by 14.5% (May) and (9.3%) June due to more mid river visitor moorings being made available this year following low utilisation last year. From 2020 there will be a considerable reduction in the number of mooring licences available for long term visitors as a result of the reduction in Town Quay mid river moorings and predicted higher utilisation rates.

PM asked how the new booking system was working. RW explained that it had recently gone live in parallel with the existing system and that live transactions were being limited while some software issues were being worked on. RW was optimistic that the new system would take over for bookings from the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2019.

CL asked if for future meetings the report can show a YTD comparison with the previous year. This was agreed.  
**Action: RW to advise Operations Manager**

6.3 Treasurers Report - RW highlighted that visitor and temporary mooring income reflected the movement in numbers described in the Operations report save for some variances due to yield. FM explained the key points in the YTD Profit and Loss report. Questions were invited.

AR asked if YTD slipway launch numbers can also be incorporated alongside the revenue comparison This would give a better feel of the impact of the reduction in vehicle launch charges and the introduction of charges for paddleboards, canoes and kayaks. This was agreed. **Action: FM**

## 7. SAFETY & PORT MARINE SAFETY CODE (PMSC)

7.1 Safety Review Meeting - A scheduled four monthly safety review meeting was held on the 21<sup>st</sup> May 2018. Questions were invited on the minute of the meeting and the incident review report for the four months January to April 2018.

AR indicated that to the best of his knowledge neither Royal Lymington Yacht Club or Lymington Town Sailing Club had followed through on their action point from the River Users Safety Committee meeting to make reference in their event safety briefings / instructions to allow extra room around the ferries while the MAIB investigation pending conclusion of the MAIB investigation into the W Class engine failures and while interim engine settings are in operation that create more wake. RW will follow up. **Action: RW**

RW reported that thus far there had been no incidents reported related to ferry wake since interim engine settings were introduced.

- 7.2 Designated Person – RW reported that work to source obtain quotes from two or three providers of ‘Designated Person’ services will be progressed over the next two months. It is intended to make an appointment by the autumn. **Action: RW**
- 7.3 LED Speed Awareness Sign - RW reported that following a request through the Lymington Harbour Advisory Group, a trial of a radar operated LED speed awareness sign on the eastern wavescreen had been concluded. The officer view was that the equipment had been reliably activated when craft that exceeded the speed limit approached the sign while transiting within the correct area of the channel (starboard side) for inbound vessels.

The sign is very similar to those used on the road and is activated when inbound vessels approaching the inner harbour are travelling at a speed of 8mph (7 knots or more) over the ground. On activation the sign displays the text ‘SLOW DOWN’. Because on most boats and under LHC’s General Directions vessel speed is measured as speed through the water, an allowance of 1 knot above the speed limit had been incorporated to take account of flood tide flows. If a speed of 12 mph (10.4 knots) or above is measured the sign will also flash.

RW explained that the sign was not intended as an enforcement tool but as a speed awareness aid to make boat helms aware when they need to slow down. AT asked whether the trial should be extended to obtain a better understanding on its effectiveness at encouraging boats to slow down. RW felt given their extensive use on the road, there must be a view that they have a positive effect and that given the generally good compliance with the speed limit, it may take some considerable time to observe effectiveness. RW indicated that there was a rental cost of £300 per month of which 50% would be rebated against the purchase price if purchased so was keen to make a prompt decision. The company were not prepared to provide a free rental period for the trial as the sign was a bespoke build for the LHC trial and rated to resist saltwater corrosion and water ingress (IP67). AR indicated that he had received positive feedback from some XOD owners who felt it was a good initiative to try and slow speed and reduce wash. Following further discussion there was a consensus that LHC should proceed.

PM asked what level of warranty was. RW advised 12 months. *(Post meeting note: Subsequently ascertained that although normal equipment for road use had a 12 month warranty, this marinised version will have 24 months)*

RW recommended that LHC progress the purchase of the sign and solar panel at a cost of £2,090 ex VAT with one month’s rental rebate applied.

**Proposed: AR**

**Seconded: PM**

**Vote: All In Favour**

## 8. 2020-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN CONSULTATION

- 8.1 RW reported that the eight-week consultation on the Strategic Plan ended on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019. Full details of the consultation feedback had been incorporated into a spreadsheet ready for consideration by Commissioners. Feedback from Lymington Town Sailing Club had been delayed because of holiday commitments. Lymington Society had also requested a short delay. The Commissioners discussed mechanisms for considering feedback. The following was agreed:

1. RW to comment on feedback on spreadsheet document and circulate to Commissioners for their review.
2. Commissioners to have a meeting to consider. It is proposed to work through the spreadsheet document with RW comments with a view to determining what modifications are required prior to finalising. Commissioners who can’t make the meeting to comment by email.
3. LHC Chairman, Vice Chairman & Chief Executive to meet with LHAG Chairman/another representative to go through their feedback and express LHC’s views.
4. LHC to finalise and publish Strategic Plan. In light of diary commitments, it was noted that the target date for publication of the 1<sup>st</sup> October was tight and that an end October timeline may be more realistic.

## 9. TOWN QUAY PROJECT

9.1 New Washrooms – RW reported that at the NFDC led project board meeting on the 30<sup>th</sup> May, an outline scheme design was finalised that met Lymington & Pennington Town Council's stated requirement for the existing building to be relocated in order to improve views down the river. The new layout also met their desire to provide a large area that can be flexibly used as a pedestrianised area or for parking depending on planned activities. At that meeting it was agreed that NFDC's appointed architect together with a NFDC representative would meet with local residents in the properties opposite to show them the proposed plans. It was understood that arising from that meeting (which NFDC's deputy Chief Executive also attended) some further modifications were made to reflect residents' feedback and improve sight lines.

RW was now waiting to hear from NFDC about what further community engagement and consultation was required prior to finalising the proposals and applying for planning consent.

9.2 Provision of Power – RW reported that work had commenced to secure the agreements to needed to install the pontoon power supply so that an order can be progressed. RW was aiming for contractors to be on site from the 4<sup>th</sup> November with completion by mid-November.

## 10. BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

10.1 Website – RW reported that work was underway to complete the marketing plan action to update and refresh the LHC website to make it easier to use and to improve access to visitor information. Following discussions with Netguides (LHC's website designer and provider of hosting service) an outline design had been agreed and a cost provided. Capital expenditure was approved by the Finance Committee at their meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> June and an order placed for completion by September. The new website will feature a fresh modern look and will incorporate features for online booking, invoice payment and customer surveys from the outset. It will also use a new content management system which will enhance the user experience on mobile devices.

AR indicated that Mylor yacht harbour just re done their web site and he was very impressed. It may be worth looking to see if there were any design ideas that LHC could incorporate.

RWag asked whether there was a search option on the current website as he was looking for the plans for Town Quay but could not find one. RW indicated that there was not one on the current site but the intention was to incorporate one into the new site. In discussion with Netguides it was established that search functions providers different offers have their idiosyncrasies and that none are perfect. LHC had looked at a number of websites which used the search function, none had particularly impressive results. However, Netguides had identified Ad Search as the most reliable provider of the ones they had come across.

10.2 Lymington Sea Food Festival – LHC will again be a sponsor of the Lymington Seafood Festival on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> August 2019. RW reported that although Hampshire Wildlife Trust had previously accepted an invitation to share LHC's stand, they were now having difficulty attracting volunteers and it now appeared unlikely that they would participate. If they can attract volunteers, it is likely that they will only be able to participate on one day.

RW referred to LHC's manning arrangements and while there was sufficient cover on the Saturday, Sunday cover manning arrangements would have benefited from an additional person based on last years' experience. RW indicated that he would continue to work on the Sunday. RJ observed that given the challenges of finding volunteers, LHC may need to reflect on whether to reduce participation to every other year in future.

10.3 Social Media Report – RW sought feedback on a report produced by the Marketing & Communications Officer on social media and newsletter activity. Following discussion, it was agreed that it would be better to incorporate the report into a single quarterly report covering all aspects of LHC's marketing/community awareness activity and that the report should be considered by the Business Development Group. Other feedback included a view that LHC should seek to further increase the level of social media posts, in-particular on Twitter and Instagram. Also, the LinkedIn account should be discontinued as it was felt that this was more a business networking site. **Action: Marketing & Communications Officer**

**11. AOB**

11.1 There was no other business in the public section of the meeting.

**12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

12.1 The next meeting will be held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2019.