

## Minutes of the meeting of Commissioners held on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2021 at 2.00pm in the Lymington Town Sailing Club

**Present:** Alison Towler (AT) (Acting Chair), Jane Challener (JC), Chris Lisher (CL), Philip Naylor (PN), Paul Harrison (PH), Mike Bowles (MB), John Morrow (JM)

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

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

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Tim Harford (TH), Andrew Richards (AR)

### 2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

2.1 There were no new declarations of interests.

### 3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (20<sup>th</sup> September 2021)

3.1 The minutes were agreed and signed by AT.

### 4. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021

4.1 Agenda Item 7.1 (Beneficial Use Monitoring Report) – The latest monitoring report (May 2021) for the beneficial use project was circulated on the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

4.2 Agenda Item 12.1 (Environment Committee) – A meeting of the environment committee is scheduled for the 10<sup>th</sup> December. RW has also held a meeting with JC to discuss progress on environmental matters and will produce a report for the meeting summarising the environment related work undertaken over the last 24 months. The report will also be circulated to all Commissioners.

4.3 Agenda 14.1 (AOB – Online Slipway Payment Portal) – The action to follow up with Harbour Systems on an enhancement to the payment portal to enable multiples of paddleboards or kayaks to be entered remains outstanding. **Action: RW**

4.4 Agenda 14.2 (AOB – Annual Public Meeting) – The annual public meeting was held on the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at the Lymington Community Centre at 19.30.

### 5. COMMISSIONERS

5.1 Commissioner Recruitment – Recruitment of a Commissioner with accountancy qualifications and a co-opted Commissioner with environmental qualifications was underway. Interviews are scheduled for Monday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

5.2 Andrew Richards – AR's final term of office as a Commissioner is due to end on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022. AT and RW thanked AR for his valued contribution on behalf of fellow Commissioners and stakeholders. As AR was unable to be at today's meeting, separate arrangements will be made to present him with a customary gift in recognition of his 6 years of service.

## 6. LYMINGTON HARBOUR ADVISORY GROUP

- 6.1 Meeting – RWag highlighted that LHAG met on the 19<sup>th</sup> October and attendance was good. The minute of the meeting was circulated to Commissioners and has been published on the LHC website. RWag also drew attention to the reappointments and new appointments within the group.
- 6.2 Redrow Site- RWag drew attention to the appeal lodged by Redrow Homes to NFDC's decision to refuse Redrow's application to not progress some of the community benefits promised as part of the planning conditions for the development. This included Redrow's desire not to progress the footbridge across the railway to connect the site to the Town and make the waterfront space a community destination as intended. LHAG members felt that Redrow should honour the agreement rather than seek to make more profit by replacing the intended community facilities with more flats, and were intending to write to object to the appeal. Following discussion Commissioners agreed to support LHAG's stance through a letter from the Commissioners albeit RW noted he had not seen any information regarding the appeal. It was agreed that RW would liaise with RWag on the responses.  
**Action: RW/RWag**

## 7. OFFICERS REPORT

- 7.1 Operations Manager Report – The operations report was circulated with meeting papers. No questions arose.
- 7.2 Treasurers Report – The Treasurer's casual income report was circulated with the meeting papers. Note: Management accounts and yield report considered 'In Committee'. No questions arose.
- 7.3 Marketing & Communications Officer Report - The marketing report for Q3 was circulated with meeting papers. AT noted the disappointing response to the visitor customer satisfaction questionnaire and asked if there was anything that could be done to incentivise. The option of using Trip Advisor was also discussed but there were concerns that feedback would not be specific enough about LHC's visiting yacht crews experiences and could just be from anyone who visits Lymington, including by land. Following discussion, there was a consensus that entry into some form of prize draw such as a free weekend of berthing should be tried. **Action: RW/Marketing & Communications Officer**

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

- 8.1 Oil Spill Response Exercise – RW reported that a desktop exercise combined with a boom deployment was undertaken on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November to test the joint Wightlink/LHC oil spill response plan for the harbour. This year it was LHC's turn to exercise a non Wightlink scenario. The exercise was attended by representatives from Wightlink, both marinas, Natural England and local HMCG. The MCA Counter Pollution Officer had to pull out at the last minute due to COP26 requirements. The post exercise report has been forwarded to the MCA Counter Pollution Officer as part of the annual training and exercise returns to discharge compliance with the plan.
- 8.2 Safety Review Meeting – An officer safety review meeting took place on the 17<sup>th</sup> September. A copy of the meeting minute and incident report summary for the 4 months May to August (inclusive) was circulated with meeting papers.

PN noted the comment in the minutes about body worn cameras adding an extra item that might get snagged when doing certain hazardous works and noted that risk assessments provided for officers to remove lifejackets in these limited circumstances. PN highlighted some work he had previously been involved with to mitigate similar risks on commercial fishing boats etc which identified a very short wearable floatation device that did not fall below the chest as a potential solution. RW agreed to investigate in consultation with officers. If officers had a concern about undertaking a particular

activity with the camera/radio's etc attached, they also had the ability to unclip these devices from the lifejacket. **Action: RW/Safety Committee**

CL noted the significant increase in collisions with stationary objects and asked if there were any further risk mitigation measures that LHC could undertake. RW referred to the safety report which explained the differing nature of these incidents which were all caused by poor seamanship or boat handling. RW did not feel there were ways that LHC could influence these types of incidents beyond the work already undertaken.

AT noted the increase in near miss incidents with the ferry from 2 in 2020 to 9. Of the nine incidents, 8 involved leisure boats being in breach of the collision regulations, six resulted in warnings being given including one to the helm of a club safety boat. A contributory factor to a further incident was inadequate supervision of dinghy sailors by a club safety boat. RW had met with both clubs to discuss his concerns about the safety boat incidents and both clubs had acknowledged that the training programmes had fallen behind due to the pandemic, possibly resulting in skills fade. This was something that they undertook to work on over the summer. AT observed that skills fade may have been a contributory factor in some of the other incidents as people had not been on the water during lockdowns.

A further near miss incident was as the result of the ferry suddenly losing power from one of its engines resulting in a temporary loss of manoeuvrability causing the ferry to hold station in safe water. While the issue was being investigated a harbour patrol boat was in attendance to keep leisure craft clear. During this period the Wightlink ferry came close to moored craft moored on the edge of the navigation channel bordering Harpers Lake. The engine issue was resolved, and the vessel made safe passage to the terminal.

RW was asked if the increase in stand up paddleboards and kayak use was causing more work for patrol officers. RW indicated that the number of incidents involving these craft was still low but there were increasing cases of polite intervention and guidance. PH asked what guidance and information is provided to these users. RW indicated that there was a water sports safety section providing comprehensive RNLI safety guidance for kayak and stand up paddleboard users on the website. There was also generic safety information for all waterborne activities on the signage at the top of the slipway such as check weather and tides, wear a lifejacket and tell people where you are going. LHC also display the RNLI paddleboard and kayak leaflets in the harbour office. Following discussion, it was agreed that it would be beneficial to supplement the generic guidance with a plan showing recommended routes for minimising use of the main navigation channel. It was also agreed to improve the distribution of safety information at the point of sale for slipway permits. Where sold online, this might be facilitated through a tick box system confirming users have read before purchase.

**Action: RW/Marketing and Communications Officer**

## **9. AOB**

9.1 There was no other business in the public session.

## **10. 2022 MEETING DATES**

10.1 The following dates were agreed for 2022 board meetings: - 24<sup>th</sup> January, 14<sup>th</sup> March, 9<sup>th</sup> May, 11<sup>th</sup> July, 12<sup>th</sup> September, 14<sup>th</sup> November. *Post meeting note: The 12<sup>th</sup> September was confirmed after the meeting.*

END

