



Minutes of the meeting of Commissioners held on Monday 04th September 2023 at 2.00pm in the Harbour Office Meeting Room.

Present: Alison Towler (AT) (Chair), Sarah Unsworth (SU), Philip Naylor (PN), Darren Longley (DL), Robert Willows (RWil), Chris Lisher (CL), Mike Bowles (MB), John Morrow (JM)

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

In Attendance: N/A

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Paul Harrison (PH), Rupert Wagstaff (RWag)

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

2.1 There were no new declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (10th JULY 2023)

3.1 The minutes were agreed and signed by AT.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF 10th JULY 2023

4.1 Agenda Item 5.3 (Commissioners) – The action to circulate an updated table showing committee membership was completed on the 7th August 2023.

4.2 Agenda Item 7.1 (Operations Manager's Report) – The Commissioners noted RW's report confirming the action to invite a Police Officer or a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) to provide a briefing on the most helpful response from LHC staff when antisocial behaviour or trespass occurred, was completed. In addition to the reported meeting on the 15th July, RW and two officers from the LHC patrol team met with two police officers to further discuss 'best practice' for LHC officer interventions related to anti-social behaviour or criminal activity. In the event of unauthorised persons being on LHC property, officers were lawfully entitled to physically remove trespassers (or make a citizens arrest) who refused to leave, but should only attempt to do so if they were satisfied that there was no threat to their safety and had body worn camera's recording. Officers are advised against physical intervention unless they feel they have no other option. The normal course of action should be to contact the police through the mechanisms previously advised and set out in RW's report. Where anti-social behaviour is being committed from the quayside, i.e. the offenders are not on LHC property, the matter should be reported to the police.

In respect of the incident reported in RW's report whereby criminal damage was caused by a youth to the CCTV camera mount at the Town Quay washroom building, RW had received confirmation that the police were progressing a case against the youth concerned.

4.3 Agenda Item 8.4 (Duty Holder Training) - SU has now received her certificate of attendance for the PMSC duty holder webinar on the 24th May.

5. COMMISSIONERS

5.1 RW reported that AT comes to the end of her second term of office as a commissioner on the 31st October 2023. Under the Lymington Harbour Revision Order (Constitution) 2002 and in accordance with Ports Good Governance (2018), as Chair, AT is eligible to serve a 3rd term and has indicated her desire to do so, subject to the views of her colleagues. It was proposed to reappoint AT for a three-year term commencing on the 1st November 2023.

Proposed: CL Seconded: JM Vote: All in Favour

5.2 AT reported that MB comes to the end of his first term of office as a commissioner on the 31st October 2023. Under the Lymington Harbour Revision Order (Constitution) 2002, MB is eligible to serve a 2nd term and has indicated his desire to do so, subject to the views of his colleagues. It was proposed to reappoint MB for a three-year term commencing on the 1st November 2023.

Proposed: DL Seconded: PN Vote: All in Favour

5.3 CL and JM have booked to attend a PMSC webinar hosted by the British Ports Association on the 3rd November.

6. LYMINGTON HARBOUR ADVISORY GROUP (LHAG)

6.1 Minutes of LHAG meeting on 18th July 2023 - The minutes of the LHAG meeting of the 18th July were circulated to Commissioners and published on the website. There were no questions arising.

6.2 Review of Stakeholder Engagement Processes – RW reported that a strategic plan objective for 2023 was to undertake a review of stakeholder engagement processes to ensure they remained effective and in line with Ports Good Governance Guidance. RW circulated a paper to compare how LHC consults and engages in practice, with the recommendations set out in Ports Good Governance Guidance (PGGG), the Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC), and the requirements of the Lymington Harbour Revision (Constitution) Order 2002 (2002 Order).

The report concluded that LHC complies in full with the recommendations of the PGGG, PMSC and the requirements of the 2002 Order, but asked LHAG and Commissioners to consider if there were other cost effective and practical measures which may improve the stakeholder engagement process. PN observed that during previous consultations and open meetings, the impression gained is that stakeholders were happy and that this might be taken as a good indicator that LHC has got its consultation about right. It was agreed that Commissioners would await LHAG feedback before finalising the review. In the meantime, if Commissioners had any further thoughts, they should be forwarded to RW. **Action: LHAG/Commissioners**

7. OFFICERS REPORT

7.1 Operations Manager - Commissioners noted the operations report.

7.2 Treasurer - Commissioners noted the Treasurer's report on casual income performance. RW highlighted the very poor weather in April, July and early August which had an adverse effect on visitor numbers and revenues. Outside of these times, there was strong demand and this had helped numbers to recover with YTD revenues 0.8% above last year but still 6.6% below budget. It is hoped that weather in September will be more favourable. Overall, year to date casual income performance was 4.4% below budget.

AT indicated that she found it difficult to reconcile visitor revenue against volume performance, taking into account the range of price increases applied to visitor charges for the current year. AT noted that while LHC needed to generate sufficient revenues to cover operating costs, investment and provide for

a contingency, revenue was only part of the story. For the town businesses and tourism, the numbers of visiting boats were more important. Volumes were also a potential indicator of affordability, particularly towards the lower end of the boating market where owners are very much on a budget. It was important to strike the right balance. There was a further discussion about how to present more data in a simplified way and it was agreed to report on numbers (overnight & short stay), revenue, berth occupancy and yield with comparisons over a longer timescale. **Action: RW & Treasurer**

PN asked if there was comparative data available for the average visiting boat crew spend for short stays and overnight stays. Post meeting note: British Marine has undertaken research for average spend by visiting boat crews. This was considered when formulating the Town Quay berth redevelopment project, but this data did not provide a breakdown break down between overnight / visitor stays.

7.3 Marketing & Communications – Commissioners noted the report from the Marketing & Communications Officer for July & August.

AT noted that marketing activity over the last two months was lower than expected given it was the peak period. RW acknowledged this and explained that this was due to the absence through ill health of the Marketing & Communications officer. There was a discussion reflecting the increasing importance of timely and relevant social media content to businesses and the need to boost activity in this area. As reflected in RW's report (agenda Item 16.2), this had already been identified and will be reflected in a draft marketing plan to be submitted to the Moorings and Business Development Committee for consideration at their November meeting. **Action: Moorings & Business Development Committee**

SU highlighted the importance of having the right person in place who is 'in touch' with the social media landscape. SM felt there may be an opportunity to use the younger generation within the team to generate content. RW explained that some effort had been made to get the outside team to capture interesting content while out and about on the river, but despite a small incentive scheme, very little had come forward. RW felt that while more free 'in house' content can be generated, to do things properly some element of content generation will need to be properly resourced. In the meantime, RW will explore further 'in house' options for content generation. **Action: RW**

RWil asked whether RW had a view on the continued use of X (formerly known as Twitter) given its move towards a more commercially orientated platform and the low number of subscribers compared to Facebook and Instagram. RW indicated he currently had no view but this should be considered as part of a review of LHC's use of all social media platforms as part of the wider review of the marketing plan. SU felt that given LHC's activities, more visually led video based platforms such as Instagram will be the most successful. **Action: Moorings & Business Development Committee**

8. SAFETY & PORT MARINE SAFETY CODE (PMSC)

8.1 Safety Committee – The next officer safety review meeting for the four-month period May to August inclusive was scheduled for the 21st September.

8.2 Oil Spill Response Plan (Tier 2 Response Exercise) – Commissioners noted RW's report setting out arrangements for a Tier 2 incident management exercise to be held on the 28th September, incorporating mobilisation of LHC's professional oil spill responders, Adler & Allen.

9. AOB

9.1 AT indicated that St Thomas Church had a new vicar. As part of his integration into the community, he was keen to learn more about Lymington, its businesses and history. RW indicated he was happy to provide a tour of the river and explain the importance of the harbour to the town and LHC's role.

Action: AT & RW

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING & 2024 MEETINGS

10.1 The next meeting is at 14.00 hours on Monday 13th November. Venue: The Harbour Building (top floor)

10.2 The following meeting dates were proposed for 2024 (all Mondays at 14.00): - 15th January, 11th March, 13th May, 15th July, 9th September, 11th November. Commissioners were asked to email RW with any dates they cannot make. RW indicated that an attempt to find alternative dates will only be made where more than one Commissioner cannot make one of the proposed dates. **Action: Commissioners**

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