

## LYMINGTON HARBOUR ADVISORY GROUP

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2019

At 1700 hrs at the Royal Lymington Yacht Club

#### PRESENT:

Rupert Wagstaff (Marinas), Chairman  
Peter Upcher (Recreational Users)  
Steve Avery (NFNPA)  
Cllr Barry Dunning (Lymington & Pennington Town Council)  
John Clarke (Lymington, Keyhaven and District Wildfowlers Association)  
Bob Chapman (Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust)

#### IN ATTENDANCE:

Ryan Willegers (Chief Executive and Harbour Master)  
Richard Jenner (Chairman LHC)

#### 1. **Apologies for absence**

Peter Ferguson (NFDC Coast Protection)  
Don Mackenzie (Lymington Society)  
Adrian Whinney (Wightlink)  
Rob Thompson (Commercial boat owners)  
David Illsey (NFNPA)

#### 2. **Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 05<sup>TH</sup> February 2019 were approved

#### 3. **Matters Arising**

##### 3 (a) Town Quay Mooring Reconfiguration Project (Agenda Item 3a)

Walcon Marine will commence mooring reconfiguration works on the 4<sup>th</sup> November with a 3 month programme due to be completed by the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020. Sureline Limited have been awarded a contract for the installation of electrical, lighting and water services on the pontoon.

To provide electricity and water services it is necessary to connect to the mains services and this will involve trenching from the road through the long stay car park (temporary loss of 8 places). These works are also scheduled to commence on the 4<sup>th</sup> November and are expected to take around three weeks. We are waiting the return of tenders for the ground works (due 25<sup>th</sup> September). We have asked NFDC to consider allowing long term parking in the short stay car park over this period. Additional ducting will be laid in trench to facilitate any future service requirements.

The plan is for new visitor walk ashore facility to be open to visiting boats by February 2020

3 (b) Town Quay Washrooms (Agenda Item 4b)

At a NFDC led project board meeting on the 30<sup>th</sup> May, an outline scheme design was finalised that met LHC and NFDC's requirement for new washrooms/public toilets and Lymington & Pennington Town Council's desire to relocate the building to improve river views and to facilitate more pedestrian space. At a meeting with local residents in June, it was apparent that there were significant concerns about relocating the building and the loss of car parking to facilitate more pedestrian space.

A decision was therefore taken to have a wider stakeholder consultation on the use of the quay before developing proposals for further consultation/public exhibition. A six week public consultation commenced on the 12<sup>th</sup> August and set out a clear timetable for considering feedback, developing and consulting on proposals (concluded by December 2019), applying for planning consents (Jan/Feb 2020) and commencing works (Autumn 2020).

3 (c) Radar Speed Signage (Agenda Item 4c)

Following a successful trial in June/July, at their July meeting Commissioners took a decision to purchase the sign.

The sign, which is very similar to those used on the road, 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.

The sign is not intended as an enforcement tool but as a speed awareness aid to make boat helms aware when they need to slow down.

3 (d) Seawall Adjacent to RLymYC (Agenda Item 4d)

A recent conversation with Peter Ferguson (NFDC Coast Protection) has established that the lead on undertaking the repairs to the seawall in this area has now been passed to the Environment Agency. An options report has now been received by the EA from consultants, Royal Haskoning DHV. The EA will now look to take forward development one of these options for the 2021 financial year. In the meantime, there is a temporary deployment plan in place to manage flood risk this winter; which (if needed), is to deploy an additional temporary flood barrier in addition to existing HESCO bags. EA / NFDC will now look to take the next steps, which will involve discussions with interested parties at an early stage. This will be to discuss the options available and identify the scale of additional financial investment required, as it is likely that (in addition to FDGiA), partnership investment would be needed in order to fund and progress any works.

It is therefore likely that this area will remain closed for 2 more years.

LHC are establishing a working group by November to consider the slipway project which will include the EA, NFDC, Yacht Clubs, Sailability, LHAG, RNLI & Lymington & District Sea Fishing Club.

3 (e) Provision of Dinghy Moorings (Agenda Item 4e)

As reported in the February meeting, given the existing space constraints in the harbour the provision of dinghy only moorings needed to be looked at in the context of a longer-term strategy as part of a complete review of mooring provision. This might also include looking at whether there

may be options to dry stack as part of a wider dinghy storage solution as both sailing clubs also had a shortage of dinghy storage options.

As an immediate option, the Commissioners have created four trial dinghy only moorings in the existing intertidal tender mooring area by the railings at Undershore Road at a fee of £60.00 per annum. These have been allocated.

It was discussed whether the Redrow pontoon could be used for tender moorings and if an amendment to the section 106 planning agreement was required to allow this. Another idea was to move the access bridge to the Dan Bran pontoon further South to allow use of the inside of the pontoon. This has been considered by LHC but it is not possible due to issues associated with moving the bridge on NFDC land.

#### 4. **LHAG Awareness**

**LHAG Awareness** – The following initiatives to raise awareness of LHAG have been implemented since the February meeting:-

- a dedicated email address – info@LHAG.co.uk has been set up and publicised on the LHC website, through a newsletter and through the leaflets/banner mentioned below. It will be monitored by the LHAG Chairman.
- a ‘Have Your Say’ leaflet has been produced in liaison with the Chairman of LHAG explaining the role of LHAG and how to contact them. The leaflet is displayed on the harbour office counter.
- a ‘Have Your Say’ banner has been produced that mirrors the message in the leaflet. This was used at the Lymington Seafood festival (with leaflets) and will also be used at other events such as the annual public open meeting.
- an article entitled ‘Have Your Say’ was published in the Harbour newsletter for July and similar reminders will be repeated periodically.

#### 5. **Strategic Plan**

The eight-week consultation on the Strategic Plan ended on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019. Twenty one responses were received including from LHAG, RLymYC, LTSC, Lymington Society and Lymington and District Chamber of Commerce. Commissioners have given careful consideration to the feedback received and responses have been provided where appropriate. Key feedback themes included:-

- The importance of providing value for money.
- The need to enable and support the activities of stakeholders including the encouragement of leisure activities, trade and business in the harbour.
- The need for harbour development to be sustainable and sympathetic to preserving its character
- The need to strike a ‘commercial balance’ in the river.
- The importance of continuing to monitor salt marsh erosion rates to inform the timing and financial planning for future phases of breakwater construction to protect the harbour.
- The desire to continue to investigate and develop options to beneficially re-use mud dredged from the harbour in order to try and slow down salt marsh erosion.
- Support for LHC’s strategic objective to develop existing and generate new partnerships with local businesses.
- Support for LHC’s communications policies and the importance of being as open and transparent as possible, subject to commercial sensitivities.
- Support for the objective to investigate options to improve the Bath Road slipway in conjunction with the key user groups.
- The importance of keeping abreast of NFDC/Environment Agency work to increase the height of flood defences in response to predicted sea level rises and the associated implications for the harbour.

- Support for the objective to improve the infrastructure for the commercial fishing fleet.
- The need for the harbour to be responsive to changing trends in leisure boating.

Having taken account of the feedback received, the Commissioners agreed changes to the plan to improve clarity and strengthen existing objectives and policies in some areas. The LHC Chairman and Chief Executive subsequently met with the LHAG Chairman and Leisure Users Representative (Mr Upcher) to go through LHAG's feedback and to provide details of the proposed amendments to the plan. Following that meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> August the LHC Chairman wrote to LHAG setting out the Commissioners comprehensive comments on LHAG's feedback and enclosing a copy of the amended Strategic Plan which the Commissioners adopt at their September 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

## 6. **Marketing & Communications Officer**

At their September meeting the commissioner approved the appointment of a part time Marketing and Communications Officer to work two days a week. This was felt to offer better value for money than continuing to use a marketing consultancy and would also release time from the HM/CEO role to focus on strategic matters.

This position was initially appointed on a freelance basis but following a successful trial period the post was made permanent from the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019.

## 7. Any Other business

- a John Clarke had been asked why the development at Town Quay seemed to favour visiting boats rather than increase the resident berthing provision to try and reduce the waiting list for a permanent berth. RW explained that as well as change the balance of existing visitor moorings to provide more walk ashore berths, this project also renewed and upgraded the commercial fishing berths to be all pontoon based and upgraded 25 fore and aft moorings for local residents to new pontoon finger berths. LHC has a duty to take into account the requirements of all stakeholders not just one group. Visitors and the other local businesses who rely on boat tourism were stakeholders too.

On completion of the Town Quay reconfiguration, 87% of all LHC moorings will be used for resident moorings with 13% for visitors. During the winter months around 97% of berths will be used for resident moorings as most of the visitor berths are taken up to accommodate resident boats relocated from the exposed lower reaches or to accommodate boats displaced to facilitate maintenance dredging. This ratio compared very favourably with Yarmouth (for example) where just 50% of berths were allocated to residents.

RW also noted that when consulting on the 2010 and 2015 strategic plans, most stakeholder feedback (including LHAG) supported the upgrading of some of the Town Quay visitor moorings to walk ashore and the associated retention of a winter mooring resource for relocating boats from the exposed reaches of the river and during winter dredging campaigns over the creation of extra resident berths.

- b. W class ferries – The MIAB investigation into the engine failures had made good progress and the MCA had approved a Wightlink plan to bring the W Class vessels out of mitigation measures so they can return to normal operations.
- c. LHC are launching their new website and online booking system shortly. The new site has been designed to be more user friendly and uses the latest technology to provide an improved customer experience when using mobile devices.

- d. At their next meeting the moorings committee will consider whether the policy of charging paddleboards/kayaks for using the slipway can be amended to encourage use by juniors.
- e. LHC further clarified that they have no involvement in the operation or opening of the toilet facilities in the bath road carpark. It has been asked why the showers on the back of the building are not in use and what the opening hours of the toilets are as nobody seems to know. LHC informed the meeting that they are a NFDC facility.
- f. It was noted that the wreck on the marsh to the east of the river entrance and outside of LHC's jurisdiction had moved and is definitely causing damage to the marsh, possibly also destroying plover nests. HIWWT to try to make further progress on how it can be removed if there is no longer a declared interest in the wreck.

Minutes taken by R. Wagstaff