

LYMINGTON HARBOUR ADVISORY GROUP

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 25th SEPTEMBER 2018

At 1700 hrs at the Royal Lymington Yacht Club.

PRESENT:

Andrew Wilkes (Business Interests) Chairman
Rupert Wagstaff (Marinas), Vice Chairman
Don Mackenzie (Lymington Society)
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 (Lymington Harbour Commissioners Chairman)

1. Apologies for absence

Peter Ferguson (NFDC Coast Protection)
Peter Upcher (Recreational Users)
Derek Graham (Wightlink)
David Illsey (NFNPA)

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th March 2018 were approved by email prior to the meeting.

3. LHAG Membership

AW welcomed Don Mackenzie (Lymington Society) to LHAG and Cllr Barry Dunning who was rejoining LHAG as the Local People's representative replacing Michael White.

4. Matters Arising

(a) Public Meeting – 21st March 2018

The joint presentation given by LHC and LHAG at the public meeting was sent to members prior to this meeting. About 20–30 people were present at the public meeting.

A discussion developed about LHC's efforts to engage more with the public. As part of LHC's sponsorship of the Seafood Festival (11th and 12th August) they took a stand to improve awareness of their role in the community. LHC were joined by Matthew Brown from the RSPB who was able to talk about their collaboration on the Roseate Tern habitat creation project. Although the weather was not great (particularly on the Sunday) there was a consensus that this was a very worthwhile event to raise the profile of the Harbour and the changes planned at Town Quay. The stand looked great, the banners worked well and 65 people signed up to receive the harbour newsletter. Overall, feedback

from residents and visitors was extremely positive and LHC reached many more people than at the AGM, so it is worth repeating in some way/form.

BD suggested that LHC could have an occasional presence at the Saturday Lymington market. It was agreed that this could be a good idea and R.Wil will consider the suggestion.

4 (b) Town Quay Development

- Since last March, work has progressed on the environmental assessments and consents needed to progress the project. The following progress has been made:-
 - a. Applications were made to New Forest District Council and the Marine Management Organisation for Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinions. The applications were supported by an environmental report from our consultants, Back & Veatch. Both organisations concluded that the development was not an EIA development for the purposes of the regulations.
 - b. An application was made to Natural England for an assessment under the Habitats Regulations on whether the proposals required an Appropriate Assessment under the regulations. The application was supported by an environmental report from our consultants, Back & Veatch. Natural England concluded that the project would not have a significant effect on the adjacent designated sites and that an Appropriate Assessment was not required.
 - c. The Crown Estate have granted a licence authorising the works under LHC's regulating lease.
 - d. An application was made to NFDC for a lawful development certificate confirming that LHC can lawfully use its permitted development powers to undertake the works. This was granted on the 14th September.
 - e. LHC has submitted an application for permission to use its permitted development powers to NFDC. This is expected to be determined by the 12th November.
 - f. An application for a Marine Licence has been made to the Marine Management Organisation. If they conclude within their 13 week target, this should be determined by the 27th September.

It is proposed to invite tenders for the works on the 31st October with the aim of receiving submitted quotes by the 1st December. LHC remain on track to appoint a contractor in January and for the works to start on the 1st November 2019.

- D.Mac asked if LHC was liaising with NFDC about their plans to redevelop the Town Quay area. R.Wil confirmed that LHC were and that LHC were particularly interested in the new toilet/shower facilities. It is critical that these are operational when the new Town Quay development is completed in early 2020. There is a possibility that the existing toilet/shower block could be moved to the south – a move which BD said would be supported by the town council. R.Wil said that moving the facilities would entail significant additional expense which NFDC may not be able to afford. LHC have agreed to contribute £75,000 to upgrading the facilities.
- AW suggested that toilets/showers could be located in an existing building adjacent to the quay. One, which might be suitable, is currently being advertised for let.
- **Post meeting note:** R.Wil contacted the Letting Agent (26th September 2018) and reports as follows: The premises is under offer and they expect it to complete. They have other interested parties in the pipeline. Also, the property is designated for office/shop use so it

would need a change in planning designation and it is probably not suitable. Also, the premises only included the ground floor which looked too small.

- D.Mac suggested that the present Rowing Club site could be a potential toilet/shower location when the Rowing Club move. However, R.Wil understands the freeholders already have plans for the site.
- R.Wag suggested it would be more efficient to dredge the Town Quay area (currently scheduled for this winter) at the same time as the Town Quay development took place in late 2019. R.Wil said it would not be and explained why.

4 (c) Radar Speed Signage

Since the March meeting, a successful application was made to Trinity House to install and trial a radar speed sign similar to those used on road to give river users an early indication of their speed. This will probably be installed on the eastern wave screen. The purpose of the trial is to see if the sign will deter instances of speeding and wash. It has also been established that the sign can be solar powered and can have variable brightness depending on day or night operation. A supplier has also been identified who has agreed to provide a sign for the trail at no charge (LHC to pay for shipment). Progress has since stalled due to other priorities but this will be progressed when time allows.

D.Mac wondered if a 'no-overtaking' rule could be implemented within the harbour. R.Wil and others said that the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea must apply.

4 (d) Sea Wall and slipway adjacent to RLymYC

- LHAG have received a response to the letter to the NFDC Chief Executive asking them to intervene to resolve the delay in effecting remedial works to the seawall so that the paved area to the south of Royal Lymington Yacht Club can be tidied up and reopened. The response from Colin Read (Executive Head of Operations) indicated that the delay was due to information still being awaited from RLymYC which should help establish apportionment of responsibility for the remedial works.

At a subsequent meeting between RLymYC and NFDC which R.Wil also attended, NFDC confirmed that they were working with the Environment Agency to procure a consultant to cost up options (preferably stabilisation). Whatever works are required, they will need to comply with the longer-term strategy for enhancing sea defences between Hurst and Lymington to cope with sea level rise and that in this context the potential upgrade to the slipway and other harbour requirements would also need to be considered. NFDC also indicated that on receipt of the outstanding information from RLymYC, they anticipated making a prompt decision on how to progress.

- D.Mac noted that a length of seawall near the causeway was lower than the other sea defences and flooding could occur as a result. R.Wil said that this was the responsibility of the Environment Agency and concerns should be addressed to them. Cllr BD said he would bring this to the attention of the Town Council.
- JC asked if there were any plans to widen the slipway near the RLymYC. R.Wil said that initial consultation on potential options and preferences for enhancing the Bath Road slipway will start over the coming months. While this will provide indicative costs/options, the finer detail of any design will need to be agreed with NFDC/EA to take account of future sea defence works. It would be possible to widen the slip to the north in the area between the slip and the RLymYC.

This area is currently reserved for beaching boats which were in danger of sinking and for wooden boats to safely 'take up' (wooden planks/caulking to expand and become water tight) after launching and before being moved to moorings. However, it is infrequently used.

- R.Wil said that a feasibility paper has been produced to consider the provision of a self-service payment option to collect slipway revenues when the slipway is not manned. R.Wag suggested that a cheaper alternative would be to ask a nearby pub to collect slipway fees outside normal office hours. A sign to this effect would be required. R.Wil/LHC will consider.

4 (e) Dinghy/tender moorings

Following the request at LHAG's March meeting for LHC to investigate whether they should provide shore accessible dinghy only moorings (as opposed to moorings for tenders), a feasibility paper has been prepared and circulated to the Mooring Committee for consideration at their November meeting.

4 (f) Credit card payments for annual moorings

LHC have decided to cease accepting credit card payments for annual mooring licence fees from January 2019 because the fees charged were significant and the Law prohibits this fee being added to mooring holder's bills. This decision was circulated to mooring holders on September 11th. LHC received feedback from 11 customers. Nine were supportive, one noted and one complaint. Two of the responses (including the complainant) asked about instalment payments and LHC have responded briefing them on the Premium Credit option.

4(g) Port Marine Safety Code

An external audit to verify that LHC's Safety Management System is working effectively and is compliant with the provisions of the Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC) was undertaken by Mr Peter Nicholson (Nicholson Risk Management) in April. Mr Nicholson's report and compliance statement was issued to the Commissioners in May. The report concluded that LHC's safety management system complied with the provisions of the PMSC over the previous twelve months. There were no non-conformities.

The Marine Safety Management Plan (MSMP) was reviewed and updated as part of this process and was reapproved by the Commissioners at their May meeting. A copy of the updated MSMP and Mr Nicholson's report can be viewed on our website at <http://www.lymingtonharbour.co.uk/marine-safety-code>.

4 (h) Breeding success of gull and tern colonies

JC had asked for a report on this subject. The RSPB normally report to HIWWT in December and this is forwarded to LHC. However, BC was asked if he would comment. He said that Common Terns, Little Terns and Sandwich Terns had been observed but, in common with many observations over the country, there were fewer than normal. This is likely to be a natural phenomena and was not a cause for concern. Terns chicks had been sighted. An above average number of gulls had been noted.

JC noted that foxes continued to be a concern. Lymington, Keyhaven and District Wildfowlers Association culled them when daylight and tide permitted. This work was supported and assisted by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust. The RSPB were also active in discouraging predators and they were believed to be experimenting with 'Squawker Boxes' which were located on the marsh and played human voices to discourage predators. Radio 4 broadcasts were reported to be the most effective deterrent!

5. Update on Harbour developments

5 (a) Commissioners

On the 31st October 2018 Geoff Stokes will retire as a Commissioner after completing two three year terms of service. Mr Chris Lisher has been appointed to fill the vacancy and will take office on the 1st November 2018. Chris will also take over the chair the Safety Committee from Geoff. A press release governing Chris Lisher's appointment was issued on the 16th July and can be viewed here <http://www.lymingtonharbour.co.uk/New-Harbour-Commissioner>

5(b) RNLI Lifejacket Initiative

The RNLI are supplying lockable boxes for yachtsmen to temporarily store their lifejackets when they come ashore by dinghy. These will be installed in the Town Quay area. LHC are awaiting supporting steelwork for these boxes which is being manufactured by Ampress Welding.

5 (c) Repairs/maintenance to 'Jack in the Basket' and mooring pile

In April a new pile was fitted to replace the one damaged on A Row by vessel 'Cable Bay'. The works were organised by Berthon who followed up with the vessel insurers.

A new top mark has been fitted to 'Jack in the Basket'.

5 (d) RLymYC Junior regatta Award

At the Royal Lymington Yacht Club (RLymYC) Junior Regatta award presentation evening, the LHC Chairman presented the LHC award for sportsmanship to Isabelle Jones (aged 11) together with a £30 Waterstones book token. RLymYC have circulated a press report on the event incorporating a photo of Isabelle holding the trophy and an appropriate caption.

5 (e) New Passenger Service

A new ferry service, the 'Coral Star', has successfully operated in the West Solent area this summer including to and from Lymington. Scheduled services will stop for the winter and recommence at Easter. Private 'on demand' cruises may take place before Easter.

5 (f) Marketing and business development initiatives

At their July meeting, Commissioners considered a draft marketing plan which had been formulated taking account of the agreed objectives, Business Development Group feedback, and third party review through the Bournemouth University initiative (see minute of last meeting) and two local marketing companies. The document sets out the business objectives, the principle delivery strategies, the actions to implement those delivery strategies, measures of success, and deliverable timings. It also identifies the resources needed to deliver the actions. The proposed strategies and actions were agreed in principle, subject to costing and some additional comments, actions and timescales being incorporated.

The agreed business objectives for the Marketing Plan are:

- Make Lymington stand out as a visitor destination from other Solent harbours. Increase visits by boat to Lymington as a whole (including private marinas). Ensure that LHC increases visitor revenues by capturing its share of additional visitor boating business to Lymington.
- Increase harbour use and revenues through improving access to the harbour for:- (1) potential future customers (children); (2) stakeholders frustrated by the length of waiting list for a resident mooring; (3) stakeholders who live outside of the area to qualify for a resident mooring; (4) stakeholders who do not have the time, desire or means to own their own boat but who still want to go boating.
- Improve awareness of role LHC as custodian of the harbour plays with regard to the town, tourism, surrounding community and local businesses.
- Improve LHC understanding of customer satisfaction with service provision. For visiting boats this should extend to the Town and surrounding area, i.e. area visitors happy with the destination as a whole?

To achieve these objectives, LHC are considering employing a part-time employee for 2 days a week, initially on a fixed term or freelance basis. His/her responsibilities will be to deliver strategies and actions to implement the business objectives highlighted above.

6. Strategic Plan

LHC will be preparing a new Strategic Plan for the period 2020 - 2025 and beyond. Work will start on this early next year.

AW asked LHAG members to be active in putting forward proposals for the new Strategic Plan. AW asked LHAG members to discuss Lymington Harbour strategic plans with member organisations so that Stakeholder views can shape the future the harbour. LHC would appreciate LHAG members' views by 1st December and they should be sent in the first instance to AW.

7. Meeting dates for 2019.

Meeting dates were discussed but not finalised – to be continued by e-mail.

8. Any Other Business

8 (a) JC said he was surprised that the new public toilet block near the Lifeboat station was locked until 6am. R.Wil will raise this with NFDC. It was also noted that the showers in this block had not yet been opened.

8(b) JC Asked about a survey vessel he had seen in Totland Bay. This is believed to be associated with proposed MCZs. There is no further information about the proposed MCZs.

8(c) JC said that a RIB had been moored for several days off the LHC pontoon in a position which obstructed access for other river users. R.Wil will investigate and consider installing a sign to discourage this.

8 (d) BC reported a successful open day by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust on 16th September. 700 – 800 people had attended which exceeded numbers at previous open days.

8 (e) D.Mac noted that the carpark adjacent to the RLymYC, slipway etc was often full to capacity. The success of the outdoor swimming pool in recent years had exasperated this problem. D.Mac suggested that dinghy trailers and trolleys could be stored on the recreation ground. Cllr BD said the Town Council would be happy to support that. AW raised a possible safety concern of children

pulling launching trolleys through a busy car park. R.Wil noted that, at events organised by the sailing clubs, Marshalls were normally present who helped to police this.

8(f) D.Mac asked what were LHC's future plans for beneficial dredging (depositing dredged material on the marsh to help delay erosion of the marsh). R.Wil replied that the beneficial dredging carried out to date had been monitored and was considered a success. LHC had been granted a licence to use 10,000 tonnes of material per annum for beneficial dredging until the 31st December 2024 in the existing location at Boiler Marsh. Looking forward, LHC will investigate the feasibility of other strategic locations which could help protect the marsh. These have to be carefully chosen and agreed with Stakeholders as dredged mud can migrate to other areas of the harbour.

8(g) Cllr BD noted that Yarmouth will be discontinuing the bi-annual festival associated with the Old Gaffers 'YoGaff' regatta. He asked if LHC would support a potential festival, on a similar theme, in Lymington. R.Wil said LHC would be keen to help but does not have the resources to take the lead role. The Old Gaffers Association plan to continue their regatta at Yarmouth as it is a separate event to the festival. R.Wil also noted that the Lymington Sea Food Festival had been a success in its first two years and had the potential to grow and be an annual event for some time to come, and there may be opportunities to link a sailing event to this festival in future.