



**Minutes of the Meeting of Cowes Harbour Commission held at
Harbour Office, Cowes on Friday 22 July 2022**

Present: Phil Hagen – Chairman (PH)
James Evans – Deputy Chairman (JE)
Vanessa Clifford (VC)
Jason Losty (JL)
James Evans (JE)
Steve Sheridan (SS)
Fiona Fitzherbert-Brockholes (FF-B)
Clive Blount (CB)
Gary Hall – Chief Executive (GH)

In Attendance: Finance Officer Theresa Dunford (TD)

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of Interest and Declarations of Related Party Transactions for Cowes Harbour Commissioners are on the CHC website.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Ra Hennessy (RH), David Riley (DR) and Ed Walker (EW).

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on Friday, 10 June 2022 having been sent out it was resolved that they be signed as a true and complete record of business transacted.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

- a) HVO30. EW has now had a discussion with a supplier and was informed that the Government removed its subsidy in April 2022. As a consequence, the cost for HVO30 is 90p a litre more than normal diesel. The cost is far too high for CHC to consider using it, so the tank which had been prepared for this will go back to diesel use. GH and EW intend to lobby the BPA to see whether they can lobby Government to reinstate the subsidy.
- b) Scholarships and bursaries – RH and GH are investigating the possibility of CHC introducing an apprenticeship scheme and the potential for a scholarship or bursary scheme.
- c) Flares amnesty – the final number disposed of was 818. GH suggested that if we run it again next year it might be a better use of resources to run it over a weekend, or a shorter number of days and hours.

5. SAFETY

The CEO/HM report was circulated with the papers for the meeting and was fully considered by the Board. The safety topic covered was 'Interaction between sailing vessels and commercial vessels. Referring to the Monthly Incident Analysis for June, it was noted that there was a jump in the figures which is expected as we move into the summer months. JL noted that swimming incidents were down

compared to last year although there is a small increase in the numbers of people swimming in the early evening when there is no patrol. There is however clear 'no swimming' signage.

6. ENVIROMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

GH and FF-B have recently met with Sue Hawley, Estuaries Officer, to discuss some of the projects she is currently working on and how CHC is influencing or is involved in those.

FF-B reported that under the Seascapes Project (£5m over five years Solent-wide project), which covers saltmarsh protection, oyster restoration, seagrass protection etc, we will be working on how this affects Cowes Harbour and what we can do to help and how it is going to help us. Directly related to the seagrass protection are our moorings, our advanced mooring system and sustainable dredging. We are in the process of structuring this but are waiting for grant applications to be approved. We are keen to get the oyster restoration underway in the hope that Cowes Harbour is the next harbour that is chosen.

The Board will be kept informed and fully updated on progress relating to oysters, dredging and saltmarsh restoration as those are the three key areas that CHC is involved in as an organisation.

In response to a question from CB relating to dredging, GH advised that EW was currently contacting all the stakeholders requesting that they let him know when they are planning to dredge. Once he has this information he will hold a meeting to go through the detail.

The Board discussed and considered how best to inform the public on achievements within our Environment and Sustainability targets. FF-B highlighted that the information is available on the website but the projects are large, ongoing and information can only be updated periodically. CB suggested that it might be worth putting out a one-pager with 'we said/we achieved' information quantifying what the CHC achieves against the Five-Year Strategy and there should be no reason why it cannot also be shared externally.

PH also reported he has received very good feedback on the work the Commission is doing and this has changed massively from previous feedback. He suggested regularly putting out some highlights on what we are achieving and equally he did not want to hold knowledge back which would show that this is the journey that we are on. The recent Pro Sailing Tour was a good example of a successful event which was positively supported by CHC and very positive feedback received.

7. FINANCE REPORT – JUNE 2022

The Commissioners noted the financial management report for June 2022 had been considered in detail in the 'In Committee' section of the meeting. The Commissioners noted that the accounts as presented in the management report had been in order and agreed.

8. CEO/HM REPORT

The CEO/HM report was circulated with the papers for the meeting and was fully considered by the Board. GH highlighted the following:

- a) Kingston pontoons – GH shared some photos showing that a section of Kingston has been completely upgraded and the wooden pontoon replaced with mesh. The new mesh will reduce maintenance costs over the next 15 years. Kingston is looking much smarter but there is more work to be done. Ultimately with our development plans it will become a very attractive asset.

- b) Afloat team – they have undertaken some recent work around Ryde Pier. It is clear that as an organisation we are getting a good reputation around the Island for the type of work the afloat team are able to carry out.

- c) GH updated the Board on the work that he and RH have been engaged in relating to the 125-year Anniversary of the Harbour Commission. He referred to the copy of the 'Yachting World' magazine of 1897 in which he found an entry for December 1897 where it talks about the very first Harbour Commissioners meeting. He is currently doing some background work on collecting stories from 1897 and Martin Knott is assisting with this. So an exhibition panel can be created.

- d) Photography and drone footage will take place next Thursday, Friday and Saturday which will provide collateral for the new website including a 360-degree view of the harbour.

- e) Five Year Strategy - The CEO 5-Year Strategy Progress report was circulated with the papers for the meeting and was fully considered by the Board. PH commented on how important it was that Commissioners are now discussing the Strategy and thanked GH for producing the headline paper which ensured that discussions took place on progress against the Strategy.

- f) Electrical chargers - these should be installed after Cowes Week although there is some delay due to the electrical company on the Island not giving a date as to when they can be connected up. During Cowes Week, GH confirmed that CHC have been loaned an electric rib from VITA boats and Aqua Superpower are providing a portable charger to charge it. The rib is 7m with a good cruising speed and reportedly charges in 40 minutes. It is not yet known how long the charge will last for although this is likely to depend on speed.

9. MATTERS FOR CHAC

CB reported that the next CHAC meeting is on 7 September at 1000 at Cowes Yacht Haven. FF-B and PH will be attending as well as GH and EW.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

As there was no further business the Chairman formally closed the meeting at 1222.

Date of next meeting: Friday 9 September 2022