



**Minutes of the Meeting of Cowes Harbour Commission held at
Harbour Office, Cowes on 20 January 2023**

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

In Attendance: Ed Walker (EW) - Harbour Master
Theresa Dunford (TD) - Finance Officer

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 Steve Sheridan (SS).

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 9 December 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

None.

5. SAFETY

The CEO/HM report was circulated with the papers for the meeting and was fully considered by the Board. The Board thanked EW for the information on the safety topic of 'Propulsion Failure'.

- a) Incidents – a general increase from 2021, mainly due to propulsion failures. A safety campaign is currently being put together around this.
- b) Interventions – these have increased dramatically but may be partly due to better reporting or lack of knowledge, but repeat offenders are very small. Patrol officers will continue to enforce the messages.
- c) Near misses and observations - these are steady but still room for improvement.
- d) There is a slight issue with CQSs between Red Funnel and yachts but statistically this is likely because it is a narrow busy channel. The only one of concern was in November between a commercial yacht skipper and the Red Funnel ferry where the ferry had to do a crash stop. The skipper has received a written warning.
- e) In October 2021, there was a consultation on personal watercraft. CHC responded and the result of the consultation is that there will now be Merchant Shipping Regulations for Watercraft 2023.

It is a Statutory Instrument in its own right and defines what a watercraft is and takes every eventuality of anything that is on the water. A key change is that it does not have to be navigating and the wording is now 'navigating or otherwise being used on the water'. CB asked about the position relating to those under the influence of alcohol or drugs. EW advised that the owner is specifically the master and it would come under the Merchant Shipping Alcohol regulations. Paddleboards are not personal watercraft and the watercraft has to be mechanically driven.

- f) Two new patrol officers have been appointed, making three in total for the season.
- g) JL commented that the safety topics being linked to what is happening currently works very well. EW confirmed that topics have now been picked through to the summer based on what generally happens throughout the various months.

6. ENVIROMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Updates from Sue Hawley were provided within the CEO/Harbour Master report and fully considered by the Board. There have been substantial delays from the MMO resulting in standstills on many of the projects.

7. FINANCE REPORT – DECEMBER 2022

The Commissioners noted the financial management report for December 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 updated the Board on the following:

- i. RH and GH are meeting representatives from the cruise industry to further develop the cruise offer and increase the number of visits to Cowes.
- ii. Dredging work will take place at Town Quay this year. There will be no dredging at Cowes Yacht Haven although East Cowes Marina will be dredging.

9. MATTERS FOR CHAC

CB reported on the recent meeting held on 11 January 2023. It was a good meeting with kind acknowledgements for David Riley and thanks given to EW. Short stay moorings and the overlapping of regattas are the major issues.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- i. Commissioner Appointment – interviews will be taking place next week for a new commissioner to join the CHC board from May 2023.
- ii. Kingston planning – planning permission received in December. Planning work is now taking place to comply with the planning conditions and agree the extent of the first phase of work.
- iii. EW advised that on 15 February 2023 an external PMSC audit will be conducted. PH and one other commissioner will be in attendance.
- iv. JE commented on the recent Newsletter which he thought was very fresh and user-friendly.

As there was no further business the Chairman formally closed the meeting at 1210.

Date of next meeting: Friday 10 March 2023 at 1000