



**COWES HARBOUR  
COMMISSION**

**PUBLIC REPORT  
COWES HARBOUR COMMISSION  
15 December 2023**

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

In Attendance: Jon Kidd (JK) - Harbour Master  
Jennie Smith (JS) – Deputy Harbour Master  
Roger Parrot (RP) - Finance Officer

**1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on Friday, 3 November 2023 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) Cruise ship mooring – following a meeting with GH, JK and JL, a proposal for a new project will be put forward and worked on in the NewYear.
- b) Rent review at Kingston – Vail Williams are reviewing rentals and GH will hopefully be able to report back at the next Board meeting in January.

**5. HARBOUR MASTER'S SAFETY REPORT**

The HM report and safety analysis was circulated with the papers for the meeting and was fully considered by the Board. JS highlighted the following:

- 12 incidents and one intervention.
- Propulsion failure is still the top incident although that figure continues to fall.
- The one intervention was for disruptive navigation which was a motor cruiser passing too close to Red Jet 7.
- GH confirmed that the Safety Topic which forms part of the HM Report also features in the monthly social media newsletter and the website. JL asked Commissioners to let him know if they wanted to focus on or raise a particular topic.

## 6. CEO REPORT

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

- a) The refurbishment of the Reception area at Shepards is now complete.
- b) Some building work has continued at Kingston and from January a Harbour Maintenance Engineer will be looking after maintenance across the whole organisation. Some office space has also been created for the team to use.
- c) Shepards Marina – for winter long term visitors there are six more boats than this time last year.
- d) Afloat Team – Cowes Week put out a tender to refurbish the race marks. CHC has secured that contract and GH reported that the relationship with Cowes Week Ltd has improved and is now very open.
- e) Ra Hennessey continues to work with the cruise industry and recently attended the Cruise Britain event in which she gave a 90-second presentation on behalf of Cowes. This received excellent positive feedback and interest from new cruise companies.
- f) Whitegates – capacity will be increased with new moorings on the north side as well as the south side and is expected to be finished early in the new year.
- g) Kingston – good reports have been received from the AP Glen Randles. CHC is setting the benchmark in many areas including health and safety, a clean and tidy harbour and the team itself with its excellent customer service.

## 7. FINANCE REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2023

Copies of the Financial Management Report for November 2023 were circulated with the papers for the meeting and fully considered by the Board.

## 8. ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

The Environment and Sustainability Report was received by the Board which included updates provided by Sue Hawley.

- Saltmarsh restoration – Sue had initially received a quote of nearly £90k for dredging which was more than the funding available but has now secured a quote from Boatfolk who have their own dredger so it is hoped dredging will be able to go ahead in the area near to Pinkmead Estate.

## 9. CHAC MEETING

GH and JK will be attending and topics to take will include the injunction regarding fog in the harbour, Whitegates and a Kingston update.

## 10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Commissioner recruitment - Interviews have now taken place and PH put forward two names, outlining their relevant skills, Mark Bew and Rupert MacInnes. There were no questions or comments and PH asked for the Board's approval to co-opt both from 1 January 2024 with their official terms to start in May. The Board **unanimously agreed**. There is a further vacancy which the Board will seek to fill in due course.

(b) Five Year Strategy Update - GH has continually updated the progress of the Strategy and has highlighted in green those that are complete. SS asked about the electric project for which funding had not been received and GH advised that the partners would still be interested but there is no funding available currently. He will bring to the January Board meeting a number of development proposals, CB asked whether there were any early indications that the electric charging facility was making any profit or how often it is used. GH thought it had probably only been used occasionally and that currently there is no demand for it.

(c) UKSA End of Year Report - A copy of the UKSA report had been previously circulated to Board members. With CHC funding, 31 local students were able to attend the Sea Change Foundation programme and part of the agreement with UKSA was that they would produce a year-end report

specific to CHC. GH proposed that CHC continue to fund some students to go through in 2024 and that potentially some of the students could become future apprentices. He sees it as the overlapping development of young people moving forward. The CHC Annual Report will emphasis what it has achieved as an organisation in supporting young people.

(d) FF-B expressed her concern that the UKSA pool is the last pool in the Cowes area for children to learn to swim and would like to support them. Whilst some funding is available for public swimming pools, the pool at UKSA is not a public pool.

**Date of next meeting: Friday 26 January 2024 at 1000, Harbour Office, Cowes, Isle of Wight**