



**COWES HARBOUR  
COMMISSION**

**PUBLIC REPORT  
COWES HARBOUR COMMISSION  
15 SEPTEMBER 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)  
Gary Hall (GH) – Chief Executive

In Attendance: Jennie Smith (JS) – Deputy Harbour Master  
Roger Parrot (RP) - Finance Manager

The Chairman welcomed Deputy Harbour Master Jenni Smith and Finance Manager Roger Parrot to the meeting. It was also noted that Richard White has stepped down as a Commissioner.

**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**

Apologies for absence were received from Steve Sheridan.

**3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on Friday, 21 July 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) CCTV – PH shared that there have been a number of issues of damage and theft on Trinity Landing. JL suggested reviewing the security plan and see where CCTV sits in that, with the aim of getting good coverage on Trinity Landing. JL also highlighted that CHC will need to look at where it sits within the Port Facility Security board as he believes there is a designated amount of people that have access to the CCTV. CB reminded the Board that in the past the gate had a combination lock on it and asked commissioners whether CHC has a responsibility to its berth holders to have more security. GH said this was a particularly grey area and it is a public landing and CB therefore suggested taking legal advice on this. JS shared that it is designated on the CHC Emergency Plan as an emergency landing area. JS has met with the PCSOs who are reluctant to do anything, citing lack of life jackets and the landing being private. Following discussion, PH summarised that an official conversation needs to take place with the Police to see what their real issues are, and also as a first step to review the CCTV situation. PH confirmed that Cowes United have had some damage to the boat and are planning to put in their own CCTV. They approached him asking if CHC are able to do anything to assist.
- (b) Additional commissioners – PH summarised that there needs to be a review of the vacancies and the marketing of the positions as a first step. It is intended that the vacancy notices will not focus on individual skills in specific areas but will mention areas of knowledge that would be an advantage to have. The intention is to try and attract the right skill sets but also be more open minded about general director level capabilities and competences that may come with an applicant.

- (c) Kingston – GH reported that work is continuing in the background. Boreholes will need to be dug across the site but there has to be a UXB specialist on site whilst this is being done. It is scheduled to take place on 5/6 October.
- (d) Flare Amnesty – it has been agreed to go ahead with this and a date will be announced, probably to coincide with the Maritime Safety Week, which is usually in July. The charge will be £6 per flare.

## **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 from the Incident Report:

- (a) Cowes Week was a success. This year there were 13 incidents compared to eight last year with the biggest incidents being propulsion failure and close quarter incidents, both of which were with Red Funnel. For comparison, last year the two biggest incidents were speed and wash.
- (b) Propulsion failure is still increasing but the campaign with RNLI and RYA continues. Some of the propulsion failure incidents are maintenance issues, and failure to use the correct fuel or flat batteries.
- (c) August saw a rise in swimmers on Trinity Landing although it is actually less than last year. To date this year there have been 14 incidents and for the same period last year there were 19. JS has spoken with the PCSOs and called the Marine Police and will be reviewing the CCTV coverage on Trinity Landing.
- (d) Top interventions are for speed and wash, down from last year when there were 109 interventions - to date there have been 43 interventions. Much of this is down to the patrol officers educating people. One constant offender has been given a warning of prosecution and this appears to have worked.

JS was thanked for putting together the HM Report. SS raised a query through GH concerning live-boards i.e. those living on pontoons, and asked what are CHC's regulations regarding discharges and enforcement. It was agreed that CHC are not able to control discharge but do encourage people to use the pump-out facility.

## **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 website is doing well and has had 16,500 visits during the past month.
- (b) The web App has been launched and positive feedback received. At the recent CHAC meeting, he was asked if the Handbook was still going to be produced and he responded that it would not be. One of the CHAC members however thought that it would still be produced, but CHC will only be producing the tide times as a smaller leaflet, alongside the web app. GH explained the contents of the app and the differences between the website itself and the web app which can be found at [app.cowes.co.uk](http://app.cowes.co.uk)
- (c) JL asked for congratulations to be passed on to the SeaClear team as SeaClear passed her annual survey with zero defects.

## **7. FINANCE REPORT FOR JULY 2023**

Copies of the Financial Management Report for June 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. FF-B reported that the oysters will be transported to UKSA later than anticipated due to the Solent being too warm and suggested that this was a story in itself and could be used to publicise the oyster project without having to wait for their arrival. The Shrape mooring is also being well used. This is technically a test case but could be another good story to publicise. The saltmarsh work is ongoing, with most of the delays down to the MMO but they are beginning to find

ways for what can be done to move the sediment but also on how to keep it where it should be and get the saltmarsh to grow. The Seascapes Project is now also focusing on a central volunteering project as there are a large number of projects, people and charities involved and it is being brought together into one hub.

#### **9. CHAC MEETING 6 SEPTEMBER 2023**

GH, JS, PH and Martin Phipps attended the CHAC meeting. GH reported that he discussed with the group the new website, showed a short presentation on the new app and acknowledged that CHC is aware that there is a shortage of berths in the Harbour and is taking a fresh look to see if there is anything more that can be done. He also highlighted it was a two-way flow of information so those with ideas around development in the harbour should contact him. He updated the CHAC on the oyster project and the Avalon parking app at Trinity Landing. Although a large number of people are invited to the meeting, the commissioners consider it is well chaired by Mark Southwell and there are no contentious discussions. Lou Newlands gave an update on the Cowes Traders Association (the previous CBA has been wound up). The clear message is that CHC is raising issues and is listening.

#### **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

**Date of next meeting: Friday 3 November 2023 at 1000, Harbour Office, Cowes, Isle of Wight**