



**COWES HARBOUR
COMMISSION**

**PUBLIC REPORT
COWES HARBOUR COMMISSION
3 NOVEMBER 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: Jenni 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, 15 September 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 – further discussions taking place next week to review options for this project.
- (b) CCTV – PH and GH have met with Trellis who confirmed that all the cameras are good but a back-end upgrade would be expensive. It was agreed to look again at this at a later date. GH confirmed some changes are planned on Trinity Landing which will improve security. CB suggested that it might be worth considering providing some webcam coverage in some spots around the harbour which might act as a deterrent. GH reported that the main harbour camera has been reprogrammed to zoom and hunt, which has improved the visibility of the main harbour.
- (c) Kingston Development – the bore hole testing has been carried out and awaiting the report which will give information on whether any contamination is present, and the make-up of the soil itself, which will determine the foundations that will need to be put in place. Once the report is received, it is intended to go out to tender and submit all the planning condition documents. It is hoped to finish the project by the end of August 2024.
- (d) Whitegates – the walkway is now complete and the hammerhead is due to be delivered next week. An invoice has been sent to IWC. SS asked what documentation was involved in transferring Whitegates responsibility to CHC. GH replied that CHC has taken on a Crown Estates Lease.

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:

- Incidents have decreased from the previous month with the top incident still being propulsion failure. JS has raised this issue with the Solent Operator Group which includes all of the Harbour Masters in the Solent. This was well received and it is hoped to work together to get material out about basic engine maintenance. The RNLI and the RYA have not progressed the issue. GH reported that the RNLI are no longer allowed to tow boats unless there is a threat to life. Some concern was expressed at this serious policy change. JS explained the procedure that CHC undertakes if they receive a call, which includes assessing the problem first then towing to an undesignated safe place and after that a towage fee.
- All previous and outstanding incidents have now been closed. GH highlighted to the Board that this had been a huge task and JS has managed to clear over 100 incidents. The Board congratulated JS on her hard work.
- CB asked about the three incidents involving the floating bridge. He reported that the flashing light appears to be turning on too soon and so many people are ignoring it.

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:

- Future management of Kingston and Shepards – some internal changes have been made which took place at the beginning of November.
- Richard is currently looking into the possibility of creating a loyalty scheme (as part of the marketing programme for next year) to see if an incentive scheme can be created.

7. FINANCE REPORT FOR JULY 2023

Copies of the Financial Management Report for September 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 and FF-B confirmed that there was nothing further to report.

9. CHAC MEETING

CB confirmed there was nothing further to report.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Commissioner recruitment - PH reported that there have been ten applicants. Interviews will take place on 10 November and 15 November.

(b) Proposed 2024 Board meeting dates – one meeting to be moved from 1 November to 25 October to reduce the eight-week gap between meetings. CB highlighted that the Strategy was to be discussed quarterly but has not been done since May and is now overdue.

(c) CB highlighted the success of Tenacious with the young people which went down well in the town with good press coverage.

Date of next meeting: Friday 15 December 2023 at 10.00am, Harbour Office, Cowes, Isle of Wight