



**COWES HARBOUR  
COMMISSION**

**PUBLIC REPORT  
COWES HARBOUR COMMISSION  
6 SEPTEMBER 2024**

Present: Phil Hagen – Chairman (PH)  
Mark Bew (MB)  
Clive Blount (CB)  
Vanessa Clifford (VC)  
Fiona Fitzherbert-Brockholes (FF-B)  
Jason Losty (JL)  
Steve Sheridan (SS)  
Rupert MacInnes (RM)  
Gary Hall (GH) – Chief Executive

In Attendance: Jon Kidd (JK) – Harbour Master  
Roger Parrott (RP) - Finance Director

**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, 19 July 2024 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) Fuel berth incident – PH sent a revised email to Donna Jones, the Police Commissioner and after four weeks has still not received any response. He was advised that it had been forwarded to a senior police officer who also has not been in contact. PH is appalled at the total lack of response over such a serious incident and has now contacted Richard Quigley MP to raise it with him with the expectation that it is raised with the Minister for Policing. The CHC do not intend to let the matter drop.
- (b) Categorisation of waters – the wave monitoring equipment has arrived which can be mounted on any of the buoys. Seaclear is out of the water currently having her 5-year survey, but once back in the water, the equipment will be set up.

**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. JK highlighted the following:

- (a) This month's safety topic offered advice on the Navigation in Cowes Harbour during periods of Restricted Visibility.
- (b) Monthly Incident Analysis - There has been an increase in the number of reports submitted following a review of the incident reporting process. There have been 20 near-misses recorded under the revised system since June.

(c) During the review, it also became clear that the patrol officers are undertaking a lot of towing of boats which is taking them away from their priority of safety in the harbour. JK and GH have been looking at how to address this and will report next month.

(d) Pilotage – 74 acts for the year and these figures are unlikely to increase as less ships are being booked in and more companies are using the ferries.

(e) Dredging – some investment may need to be made next year. Jenkins Marine will dredge CYC and RYS in October and the rest next year in February/March.

(f) TEP event – another one will be run at the end of September. GH and JK have been looking into whether CHC could potentially become a drop-off and CB outlined the previous discussions that have been held by the Board on this.

(g) PMSC Audit Report – the written report is due to be received next week but Capt. Martin Phipps ran through the report verbally with JK. There are some small observations which will need to be addressed, mainly relating to paperwork.

## **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) Visitor numbers – these are down for this year mainly due to the weather. This will have an impact on finances, not just for CHC but for the town in general. The number of people going out on their boats appears to be down but when the weather is good, this results in the capacity issues for berthing and moorings.

(b) GH and JK are having discussions on looking at how CHC might further support youth training.

(c) Event bookings – no events have been cancelled but the number of people taking part is lower this year. The reasons behind this are not entirely clear but could relate to how events are promoted or sailors choosing smaller boats.

## **7. FINANCE REPORT FOR JULY 2024**

Copies of the Financial Management Reports for July 2024 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 and fully discussed by the Board.

(a) The Solent Seascape Project is going really well with many people involved in raising the awareness of seagrass. It will be interesting to see if anything has changed in Osborne Bay this year.

(b) Saltmarsh dredging – the MMO have said an application has to be made for the site where we want to dispose of the material so that it gets officially recognised as a disposal site and have warned the environment officer that this may take a year although the funding she has secured has to be spent by the end of the year. She is working to get support to try to get this overturned.

## **9. CHAC MEETING**

The meeting took place on Wednesday 4 September. CB reported that it had been an extremely useful meeting, and the PMSC briefing from Capt. Phipps was very well received and had made an impact on those attending. GH gave a presentation on the plans for the new Cowes Harbour Marina, the feedback from which was very positive. JK had also reported on the recategorisation of waters. The commissioners had a discussion on licensing and coding and how this might impact on sailing clubs.

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

i. Marina layout plans - GH talked through some graphics relating to the amended marina layout plans. The walkway has been moved adjacent to Bell's Landing which was a specific request from East Cowes Town Council. GH is awaiting revised drawings and

costs. It is known that dredging costs will increase and maintenance dredging will need to take place every three to four years but this has been budgeted for. GH confirmed that it is still the aim to open by Easter 2026. JK will begin work with the licence application with the MMO, and GH will appoint a company to start work on the planning application. Dredging is planned to start in July 2025 which should give sufficient time to go through the MMO processes. Boats on swinging moorings are likely to be moved into the harbour. If anyone gives up a mooring generally in the harbour this year, then it will not be renewed so that some capacity is freed up to give the boats a new location. The main harbour swinging moorings will be reviewed which, going forward, will be available to day boats only. PH suggested possible rib parking on the north east wall.

- vi. 2025 Board meeting dates – PH has drawn up the proposed meeting dates for next year and will circulate them to the Board. Some dates have been moved slightly from a finance point of view to a week later so there is less pressure RP to get the figures out to the Board. Any queries on the dates should go back to PH.
- vii. JL commented that he had observed some very good lifting operations at Shepards by the crane drivers. GH confirmed that the new maintenance person has started and has been very productive since being appointed.
- viii. SS asked whether it was intended to replace the fuel pumps next year as they are nearing their end of life. GH will look to see if this can be put into the 2025 budget.

There being no other matters for discussion, the meeting closed at 1241.

**Date of next meeting:**

**Friday 25 October 2024 at 1000, Harbour Office, Cowes, Isle of Wight**

  
25/10/2024