



**COWES HARBOUR
COMMISSION**

**PUBLIC REPORT
COWES HARBOUR COMMISSION
25 April 2025**

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

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

PH introduced Giles Peckham as the new Cowes Harbour 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 AND INTRODUCTIONS

There were no apologies for absence.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 14 March 2025, having been sent out, it was resolved that they be signed as a true and complete record of business transacted.

4. ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

- a. **GH to confirm venue for Board meeting and Strategy review** – ongoing and awaiting confirmation of availability for Building 41, Cowes.
- b. **JK to put Significant Events on live CHC website page** – completed.
- c. **JK to look at environmental improvements** – ongoing and JK is awaiting an update on native oyster plans.
- d. **JK to undertake Fire & Risk Assessment** – completed.

- e. **JK to request proposal from Marine Police** – Completed. JK has not received a proposal from the Marine Police although he has been invited to undertake some JESIP training in Eastleigh.

5. HARBOUR MASTER'S OPERATIONAL REPORT

The HM Operational Report was circulated with the papers for the meeting and fully considered by the Board. JK highlighted the following:

- a. **Pilotage acts** – A very quiet March and April after a busy start to the year but this may increase with more grain ships leaving the Island.
- b. **Pontoons** – The mesh deck for Trinity Landing and G Pontoon has not been delivered yet but is due within the next week and should be completed quickly and in time for the summer season.
- c. **Flare disposal** – The DHM is working on sourcing a suitable storage container facility. IWC will inspect this as a precursor to obtaining the licence, which is still on track for mid-year.
- d. **Trinity House Cadetship** – Candidates were interviewed this week and a place has been offered. JK will update the Board further once the offer has been accepted.
- e. **Chain Ferry** – JK attended the 'Medina Crossing Outline Business Case' workshop. The group is made up of a number of people who are looking at previous and new options, ultimately working towards creating a shortlist of six options followed by some public engagement.
- f. **MAIB report** – The report has been released on the fatal boating incident involving a disabled sailor in Cowes in October 2022. CB advised the Board to read the report for the conclusions and recommendations. JK will be circulating the report to the Clubs' events organisers and will highlight key points from within the report including risk assessments and communications.

6. HARBOUR MASTER'S HEALTH and SAFETY REPORT

The HM Health and Safety Report was circulated with the papers for the meeting and fully considered by the Board. JK highlighted the following:

- a. **High Level H & S Group meeting** – The first meeting has been held and this group will now be referred to as the Safety and Regulatory Compliance Group (SARG). The meeting was successful and JK can circulate the Minutes and actions from that meeting. JK thanked RM for his input and guidance on creating the H & S Report circulated to the Board.
- b. **The Executive Summary** – the report includes an Executive Summary and CHC's current overall risk position.
- c. **Top Five Risks** – The report includes the top five risks from across the organisation, and all risks are mitigated against ALARP principles. The number one risk is 'Collision – Recreational Vessel with Chain Ferry'. Following discussion, it was suggested that the use of Channel 69 needs to be highlighted with increased signage. On a related matter, JL asked if the risks had been identified relating to boats that have been displaced. JK confirmed that he is in conversation with those who are not happy with their new moorings. JK also reported that staff have recently been trained in M.O.B. procedures (risk number two). Swimming/jumping in from structures in the Harbour is the fourth risk, and some discussion took place on the possibility of providing a safe swimming area for the public. JK will look further into this.

- d. **PMSC Audits** – There are two items still outstanding from the 2024 Audit, which is ‘whole Board duty holder training’ which is scheduled for June 2025, and the other is reliant on the GD amendments on towing which is out for consultation. The main 2025 Audit is due to take place after Easter.
- e. **Site Inspections** – All sites have now been inspected and action trackers are in place. Board members reported they have visited both Kingston and Shepards recently and were impressed with the cleanliness and professionalism of both sites.
- f. **Statutory documents** – GD amendments for towing and water taxis are out for consultation over a period of six weeks, after which the new GDs must be advertised.
- g. **Newsletter safety topics** – May’s newsletter will cover essential safety information including lifejackets, kill cords, GDs, LNTMs and Channel 69 information.
- h. **Incidents** – a collision involving a motorboat maneuvering off its berth which made contact with another moored vessel resulting in some minor paint damage. The owner of the damaged boat has not yet responded to CHC’s communications. The incident will remain open until the customer makes contact to ensure there are no insurance claims.

7. CEO REPORT

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

- a. **Sugar Store** – Refurbishment has taken place during the winter and it now looks excellent. Eazibar continue to operate the Sugar Store and there was a successful opening over the Easter weekend.
- b. **Thai Restaurant** – the unit has been completely transformed. It will be take-away to start with and then full restaurant to follow.
- c. **Kingston customer lounge** – This has been very successful and is particularly popular in chat groups on some of the Solent boating forums.
- d. **Site signage** – New signage has been installed across the sites.
- e. **Marketing** – RH is taking a fresh look and working on marketing proposals including superyachts and the new marina, Kingston and the fuel berth.

8. FINANCE REPORT FOR MARCH 2025

Copies of the Financial Management Reports for March 2025 were circulated with the papers for the meeting and fully considered by the Board.

9. ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

A report was not available for the meeting. However, FF-B will introduce the new Quality Assurance and Environmental Officer at the next Board meeting.

10. BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN UPDATE – Review of high risks

There were no further updates.

11. CHAC MEETING

GH and JK attended the CHAC meeting on 2 April 2025 and GH updated the group on various topics including the new marina and dredging and responded to questions relating to tides, big boats on the outside of the new marina and the green provisions. Utilities connections were also raised and whether the dredging of the marina would affect the small ships channel. JK reported on his incident and safety reports, saltmarsh regeneration, flare disposal and cadetship. It was a positive meeting, and the next meeting will take place on Wednesday 10 September 2025. The minutes, once published, appear on the CHC website. FF-B asked if the Minutes could be distributed to Board members which was agreed.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- i. **Steve Sheridan** – Steve has been a commissioner for six years and this was his last meeting. PH thanked him for his tremendous contribution to the Harbour Commission over the years and gave appreciation on behalf of the Board. Steve has agreed to assist and provide input on future projects when he can.
- ii. **Vanessa Clifford** – VC has agreed to extend her time on the Board of Commissioners for one further year. PH also thanked her for her work and contribution over the last six years.

Date of next meeting: Friday 6 June 2025 at 10.00 at the Harbour Office, Cowes, Isle of Wight



06/06/2025