



**COWES HARBOUR  
COMMISSION**

**PUBLIC REPORT  
COWES HARBOUR  
COMMISSION 30 JANUARY  
2026**

Present: Phil Hagen – Chairman  
(PH) Mark Bew (MB)  
Clive Blount (CB)  
Fiona Fitzherbert-Brockholes (FF-B)  
Jason Losty (JL)  
Rupert MacInnes (RM)  
Giles Peckham (GP)  
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 AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Apologies for absence were received from Vanessa Clifford (VC) and Jackie Riley (JR).

**3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 12 December 2025, having been sent out, it was resolved that they be signed as a true and complete record of business transacted. The Public Report was also unanimously approved.

**4. ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The Action Tracker has been updated to show completed and live actions.

**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. **Swimming Area** – The idea was presented at the recent CHAC meeting and favourably received. JK is setting up various meetings with the town councils who are supportive and have funding available. They have also offered to support any funding applications. The preferred area is off the Parade, immediately north of the public slipway near the RNLI station, with a versadock structure, which can be removed if necessary. Subject to securing funding, it could be up and running by the summer. JK will check that an

MMO licence is not required, but if so, the structure would be exempt. He will have a conversation with Southern Water about water quality.

- b. **Flare Disposal** – 297 flares have now been transported to Ocean Safety in Southampton for safe disposal.
- c. **Chain ferry** – JK is part of the working group looking at the potential procurement of the new vessel. The council has taken on two voluntary technical experts and is looking to recruit a paid technical advisor. The key areas for improvement are traffic and passenger separation, and aiming for five return crossings per hour. The council is looking at hybrid design options, although JK is of the view that it is more likely to be diesel electric. They will also look at ramping structures and hydrodynamics so that it can operate without a push boat. Into the future, they may consider remote operation and to contract out to build, supply and run with the Council receiving a fee. JK will keep the Board updated.
- d. **Statutory documents** – JK and DHM have reviewed and revised the documents, which will be reissued on the website this week. The Port Waste Management Plan is reviewed and submitted to the DfT and EA every five years, and CHC is about two and a half years into that cycle. JK is awaiting the PMSC Safety report so that the wording can be finished within the safety management system and reissued. These changes will be brought to the Board for approval.

## 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. **Site Inspections** – these will be reactivated in March.
- b. **MAIB reports** – JK shared links within the recent MAIB and HSE reports. JK reported there are some changes being introduced with ABP relating to ENG1 medicals, and ABP are looking at bringing in an additional check for their pilots relating to climbing ladders. All CHC pilots have ENG1, which is undertaken every two years and ensures the minimum level of health and fitness. Pilot boat crews are medically trained and specifically with crush injuries.
- c. **Incidents** – a total of six incidents reported since the last meeting, three of which were propulsion failures. The Patrol Team reported that more people appeared to be behaving more professionally on the water this year. The Shetland Trader report has been finalised and sent to the MAIB. As there was no suggestion of wrongdoing by the master and no loss of life, there will be no further investigation. JK responded to various technical questions raised by GP relating to the incident and the vessel's engine and generators.
- d. **First aiders** – all the staff will be undertaking basic first aid at both Shepards and Kingston.
- e. **Harbour Safety Day** – this is planned for Saturday 18 July 2026 and will be an interactive safety day. DHM has issued around 25 invitations to local organisations related to water safety, health and first aid, and interest has been good. The target audience will be those who interact with the water and harbour, and activities will include a lifejacket clinic, demonstrations/interactive challenges and activities.

## 7. CEO REPORT

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

- a. **New Marina** – the EIA has been completed and the MMO licence application submitted. The Planning permission documentation will be submitted on 2 February.
- b. **Kingston** – a small planning application needs to be submitted for lighting,
- c. **Superyacht Marketing** – good progress is being made on the marketing

- activity supporting superyachts in the new marina.
- d. **Kingston** – Vikoma have vacated the tent, which is now available. Current marketing is promoting self-storage and undercover storage, plus the potential to create undercover workshop space.
  - e. **Electronic boat** – delivery is still awaited. The bespoke equipment has taken longer to design and manufacture than they anticipated.
  - f. **Whitegates** – Since CHC acquired this, there has been very little trouble in this area, although the patrol team do go in occasionally to move youngsters on, but it is nowhere near the level it used to be.
  - g. **Human resources** – RP updated on the seasonal team with many team members returning this year. An enhanced staff benefits package has been rolled out and has been well received.

## 8. FINANCE REPORT FOR YEAR END 2025

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

## 9. ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

The Environment & Sustainability report was previously circulated with the papers and fully considered by the Board. GH highlighted the following

- a. **Carbon reduction and purchasing renewable energy** – FF-B reported that whilst there is a cost to purchasing renewable energy, this is by far the fastest way to carbon reduction and key to CHC's carbon reduction targets. RP is actively working on this.
- b. **Solar panel project for Kingston** – GH reminded the Board that 2-3 years ago, CHC was part of a ZEV1 project to put solar panels at Kingston. Some of that team have now successfully applied for Innovate UK funding, so this project has been resurrected.

## 10. CHAC MEETING

The CHAC meeting took place on 14 January 2026. GH will meet up with Mark Southwell to discuss the constitution of the CHAC, the current terms of reference and representation. The Board agreed that communication and the sharing of information with the CHAC group is good, but it is clearly not being shared more widely.

## 11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- a. **Cyber Review** – This last took place in June 2023. Two spot tests were undertaken in 2024. PH proposed that consultants be engaged to undertake the cyber review, and MB will review the spec for this.
- b. **June Board meeting** – PH requested that this be moved by one week, and the Board agreed to move this to Friday 12 June 2026.
- c. **New Commissioner applications** – A good number of applications has been received, so a short list will now be selected for interview. The Board agreed that the interview panel should include an external person. The panel will seek approval on their selection from the Board at their meeting on 13 March. The successful applicant will then be invited to the April Board meeting as an observer and join the Board at the following meeting in June. Interviews will need to be completed within the next two to three weeks.
- e. **Pump-out** – FF-B requested that a marketing plan be devised to encourage people to use the pump-out facility.

- d. **Dragons for Cowes Week** – In response to a question from GP, GH replied that whilst Walcon have produced the design, he is still waiting costs.
- e. **Future-looking Meeting** – GH will circulate a date in March for this meeting and will look into the possibility of a facilitator.

**Date of next meeting:** Friday 13 March 2026, at Cowes Harbour Commission Office, Cowes, Isle of Wight.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping, fluid strokes that are difficult to decipher as a specific name.