

## ITEM

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### Salcombe Harbour Board – 5 September 2006

#### TOPICAL HARBOUR ISSUES

##### Report of the Salcombe Harbour Master

**Statutory Powers:** Pier and Harbour Order (Salcombe) Confirmation Act 1954

**Financial Implications:** None

##### Purpose

The intention of this report is to inform Members of significant issues with implications for the operational management of Salcombe Harbour.

#### RECOMMENDATION

**That the Harbour Board RESOLVES to note the report.**

##### Main Issues

##### Harbour Master

1. Mr I Gibson assumed position and responsibilities of Head of Service Salcombe Harbour and Harbour Master on 24 July 2006.
2. During the protracted period when the harbour was without a harbour master, the harbour staff rose to the challenge and maintained the Service's outputs and reputation.
3. Nicholsons Management Ltd, the independent designated organisation appointed by Salcombe Harbour Board, have confirmed that following a review of Safety Management on 8 March 2006 that, during the period without a harbour master, the Harbour remained compliant with the Port Marine Safety Code.

##### Recycling Afloat

4. As Members will be aware, the afloat recycling initiative was launched on 11 July 2006. This exciting initiative generated much local and press interest, and has seen considerable use since it started.
5. Whilst there is much to be positive about with regard to this initiative, from a harbour perspective there have been a number of operational issues. The shortcomings have been:
  - The facility as it struggles to cope with the capacity of waste generated in the high season. This puts considerable strain on the

manpower, which increases risk in other areas of the harbour. It is intended to press on this summer and to review and modify the facility and routines for next year.

- The project was launched before the lifting davit was fitted to the workboat. Consequently, the waste bins have had to be manhandled into the transporting vessel although some modifications to the handling arrangements have reduced the health and safety concerns.
- The facility has not been extended to the visitor's pontoon because of a lack of assets and shortage of time to implement.

### **Residents Pontoons**

6. As has been previously explained, the Resident's Pontoons are in an extremely poor state of repair, many of the buoyancy chambers have failed, the linkages of the fingers are fatigued and failing, the decking is lifting and temporary repairs will only last a short time. This course of action is not cost effective. This has been recognised and a project commenced to consider the replacement of the resident's pontoons.
7. A Project appraisal form 3 has been commenced, and Paul Carpenter Associates have, for several months, been working on a specification for an Invitation to Tender for the Resident's Pontoon project. This should be complete by the beginning of September.
8. Thereafter, depending on suitability and affordability of tenders, a report will be brought to the Harbour Board for consideration. Subject to support, this will then be the subject of a recommendation to Council for approval to proceed. It is hoped to place a contract to complete the scheme before the start of the 2007 season.

### **Safety Management System**

9. The Chairman of the Salcombe Harbour Board reported to the MCA in July 2005 that Salcombe was compliant with the Port marine safety Code.
10. To remain compliant, it is a requirement for an independent designated person, appointed by the Harbour Board, to audit and advise on the operation of the Safety Management System. Following a visit of the Salcombe Harbour Authority's (SHA) independent designated person, Peter Nicholson of Nicholson's Risk Management, it has been agreed that he will return in October 2006 to complete the annual audit.

### **House Boats**

11. The first of the new house boats arrived in early July and the first visitors embarked on 7 August. As Members will note, the type and size of vessel is very much along the lines of the proposal that was presented to the Harbour Board some while ago.

12. There are a number of loose ends that need addressing between SHA and Blue Water Martine (BWM). A meeting to address these was held on 7 August 2006 and as a result the following actions have been set:
  - BWM are to provide SHA with a copy of their Method statement and Risk assessments for houseboat operation and maintenance.
  - BWM are to produce a booklet covering the safety considerations and briefing notes for occupants of the houseboats.
  - BWM are to produce a proposal of their aspirations for winter storage.
  - BWM have been directed to change their sales documentation to reflect the fact that SHA can and will only offer a one year mooring contract. They have been instructed that these changes are to be agreed with the Harbour Board in advance as a condition to the grant of any future mooring contract.
13. The second houseboat is in Plymouth and expected to arrive before the end of August.
14. Houseboat hulls three to seven are expected to arrive in 2007.
15. The old houseboats are in the process of being disposed of and will be removed from the harbour before their replacements will be permitted to arrive.

### **Harbour Guide**

16. The 2007 Harbour Guide, despite being very attractive, has proved to be very expensive to produce. The larger guide is expensive to print and more expensive to mail, so much so that with the consultancy costs, the harbour has made a loss of £12,000 this year. It is therefore proposed to revert to the smaller A5 format for 2007, a format that has historically made a small profit.

### **Performance**

17. Up to the end of July, in comparison to 2005 figures, visitor nights are up by 10%, visiting yachts are up by 40% and income is up by 27%. However, Taxi usage is down by 5% and taxi income is down by 8%.
18. Overall the budget predictions for 2006, incorporating the increased income up to the end of July, are for a surplus of £16,000. However, there will be a risk of this surplus being reduced depending on the winter maintenance requirements when the moorings are lifted in the autumn.

## **Marine Conservation**

19. The Marine Conservation Officer's (MCO) work programme for 2006/07 has been agreed and will include:
- Development of the 5 year interpretation plan for the Salcombe - Kingsbridge Estuary Conservation Forum (SKECF).
  - Facilitate a Seaflex trial and assess benefits to eel grass beds.
  - Review and develop the General Estuary Leaflet.
  - Conclude the underwater film project.
  - Encourage involvement of local community in catchment sensitive farming initiative.
20. Members are requested to note the following conservation related issues:
- A working meeting of the SKECF was held on 27 June 2006, attendees were requested to take stock of the Forum's meetings, with a view to progressing terms of reference, to enable efficient interaction with Harbour Board as a stakeholder group.
  - English Nature has conducted a condition assessment survey of The Estuary. Unfortunately the upper estuary is assessed as being in poor condition and suffering from excessive nitrate loading, particularly on Gerston mudflats off the sewage treatment works. Environmental consultants have been commissioned by South West Water and the Environment Agency to quantify the condition of the mudflats more scientifically.
  - As part of National Beachwatch Weekend, there will be a Salcombe shoreline clean-up on Sunday 17 September.

Ian Gibson  
Harbour Master

Salcombe Harbour Board  
5 September 2006

**Background Documents:**  
SH. 46/01 and SH.14/02.