

ITEM

ITEM

SALCOMBE HARBOUR BOARD - 8 November 2005

PROVISIONING AFLOAT

Report of the Salcombe Harbour Master

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

Financial Implications: Advertising costs to be met from existing balances.

Purpose

The purpose of the report is to ask Members to consider inviting expressions of interest from suitable local businesses who wish to be considered for a short list of tenders to provide a provisioning service to vessels afloat.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board RESOLVES to instruct the Harbour Master to advertise for expressions of interest from local businesses wishing to be included on a tender list to provide a provisioning service to vessels afloat.

Background

1. In recent years the variety and choice of shops in Salcombe from which basic provisions can be purchased has become very limited and adverse comments from customers have not gone unnoticed.
2. The Salcombe Harbour Kingsbridge Estuary Byelaw no.53 which is entitled, Unauthorised Trading Prohibited, states:

‘No person shall within the harbour engage by way of trade in buying or selling any goods or property without the written consent of the Harbour Master’.
3. Historically any trading that involves direct dialogue with customers whilst relaxing onboard their vessels either moored or at anchor has been resisted and should continue to be so in the future, in part it is what makes the ‘Salcombe Experience’ so unique.
4. However with the advent of e-technology services can be obtained and customers can be contacted through mobile phones and web sites which mean that transactions can be handled discreetly without being intrusive.

5. To enhance the customer experience in Salcombe, those who wish to purchase goods, especially outside normal shop hours, could do so by accessing a service through electronic means whilst afloat and goods could be delivered to a nominated landing facility or directly to them afloat. This method of operation is far more sensitive and acceptable than permitting a system that involves directly touting for business. Although the Harbour Master has the delegated authority to proceed, (through the Council's Scheme of Delegation and the Harbour Bye-laws) the Board's opinion and approval is sought, as this initiative is a new approach and will inevitably be contentious in some areas, if not handled sensitively.
6. A proposal to provide wireless internet connectivity throughout the estuary is under investigation by the Harbour Master, whereby harbour users will be able to access the internet afloat, if this was introduced then it would enhance the system.
7. The operation itself would be licensed by the Council through a contract for which the Board might expect some level of remuneration. In drawing up a contract the Harbour Master would seek advice and guidance from the Head of Property Services and Head of Corporate Services (Legal).
8. The advertising process for expressions of interest to run this service would welcome any existing or future local business with a suitable business case who asked to be included on the short list. A contract would be awarded to a single operator.

Risk Assessment

Risk	Mitigation
Customer concerns about the limited availability of basic provisions ashore	Award contract for single contractor to deliver goods afloat
Harbour users tranquility disturbed whilst afloat	Ensure contract includes relevant clauses to prevent touting

Conclusion

9. Through new technology available to the ports industry, we are able to look at the delivery of our services in different ways and where enhancements can be made to the customer's experience, suitable arrangements can be put in place, and in such a sensitive location, any adjustments must be done in a discrete manner to ensure that the unique experience of Salcombe is preserved. The Board is asked to consider the use of new electronic technology to award a contract for the provisioning of vessels afloat from suitable local businesses.

Stephen Tooke
Harbour Master

Salcombe Harbour Board
8 November 2005

Paula Brooks
Strategic Director (Operations)

Background Documents:

Salcombe Harbour Kingsbridge Estuary Bye-Law No: 53