

Salcombe Harbour Board, 18th April 2005**VISIT TO WHITSTABLE HARBOUR****Report of the Salcombe Harbour Master**

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

Financial Implications: Contained within Harbour Revenue Budget and possible cost share with Corporate funds.

Purpose

1. This report informs Members that a letter of invitation has been received by the Chairman of the Salcombe Harbour Board from Whitstable Harbour Board inviting Members of the Board to visit Whitstable to discuss with them their new arrangements.
2. The visit will assist Members with the development of the Board's Strategic Business Plan and provide an invaluable and unique training opportunity.

Recommendation

That the Board instructs the Harbour Master to accept the invitation to visit Whitstable Harbour on behalf of the Board and agree a suitable date in the near future.

The Issues

3. A Government White paper on the Future of Transport entitled – “a new deal for transport : better for everyone”, provided a clear statement of ports policy. This gave an opportunity for the Department for Transport's Ports Division to review the Trust Port sector. A document that came out of the review entitled, 'A guide to good governance' provided guidelines for board governance. Although originally written with Trust Ports in mind the DfT have made it clear that Municipal Ports should look to the guide for best practice.
4. The DfT's review of municipal ports is taking longer than expected to emerge and therefore Canterbury City Council, the owners of Whitstable Harbour, took the decision not to await the review document but self initiated significant changes following a review of their own Board governance. The DfT now look to Whitstable as a current leader in terms of best practice.
5. During the Harbour Board training sessions it emerged that Members identified governance arrangements as one area to be included as part of the strategic business plan under development by the Board. Therefore contact was made with the Whitstable Harbour Board to gain a clearer understanding of their situation.
6. The Whitstable Board has kindly written to the Chairman of the Salcombe Harbour Board inviting Members to visit their Harbour in Kent to discuss with them their situation and the benefits gained from change.

7. The Board is asked to discuss the letter of invitation and provided the Board supports in principle the visit to Whitstable, the Harbour Master could then be instructed to make the necessary arrangements to facilitate the visit.
8. In advance of today's Board, Officers have discussed the obvious financial implications should Members wish to take up this invitation. The costs could be shared between the harbour revenue account and funds being made available within the Council for such a training event.

Conclusion

9. The themes emerging from the DfT point towards change in light of the modernising of local government, modern ports policy and the emphasis to safety and security of ports and harbours. The 'Whitstable Model' is considered the industries' current best practice model. Accordingly Members may find the visit both timely and useful as part of the future strategic business plan development.

S E Tooke
Harbour Master

Salcombe Harbour Board
18th April 2005

P Brooks
Strategic Director (Operations)

Background Documents

Letter of Invitation from Whitstable Harbour Board dated 1st March 2005
Trust Port Review – 'A guide to good governance'