

**Salcombe Harbour Board, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2004****YACHT TAXI SERVICE****Report of the Salcombe Harbour Master****Statutory Powers: The Pier and Harbour Order (Salcombe) Confirmation Act 1954****Financial implications: Maximum additional income of £10,000.****Purpose**

1. At the last Board, Members' were asked to consider future levels of service provision and to set the 2005/6 budget and charges as part of the Financial Forecast. Members considered ways of addressing the funding gap by considering the Yacht Taxi charges for the next financial year.
2. Members agreed to an increase in the cost of a trip off the town from £1 to £1.50, however before making a decision about trips to the Bag the Board requested additional information; this report provides that information. (SH. 12/04).
3. The contents of this report are linked to CP6 – "the improvement of core services in a cost effective way".

**Recommendation**

That the Board RESOLVES:-

- (i) increase the charge of a single trip to and from the Bag from £1.50 to £2.00.
- (ii) that a new charge for single trips to and from areas above Tosnos Point be levied at a cost of £3.00.

**The Issues**

4. The service was originally designed to transport visitors from the town quay and pontoons to the moorings ' Off the Town' and to the visiting pontoon in the Bag. This ensured that visitors could safely enjoy a night out in Salcombe and from a Board's perspective it had the added benefits of limiting the number of small tenders on the Whitestrand and Normandy pontoons. It also provides an additional facility to the customer in line with most other Leisure Ports.
5. In 1987, the Harbour Board took over the delivery of the then privately operated Yacht Taxi Service due to the quality of the service provided to the visiting yachtsman. The service remains safe and efficient and helps promote the reputation of the Harbour Board throughout the Sailing community.
6. As a service to the resident harbour user the operation was extended to provide water transport for the resident berth holder provided operational commitments permitted.

7. The Salcombe Harbour Policy Document states that, "The Harbour Board may operate a Water Taxi Service at its discretion and the operation of the service be under the supervision of the Harbour Master. Such service and its charges shall be approved by the Harbour Board each year". (SH. 45/99 – the Policy was reviewed in 1999 as part of a review of the document as a whole).
8. The Harbour Authority, as a service to the public, provides trips to and from the East Portlemouth side, on the hour, after the East Portlemouth Ferry has stopped running, providing bookings have been made in advance. The service is only offered within the operating times of the Yacht Taxi Service. It was not designed as a ferry service and if it was asked to do so, would severely disrupt the service for which it was originally intended.
9. The charges for the service are adjusted every third year to a level that is both reasonable and provides the taxi drivers with easy cash handling. Members should consider the difficulties of cash taking, issuing tickets whilst safely navigating through the Harbour as high importance to their staff.
10. Members debated and agreed to a raise of the cost of a trip "off the town" from £1 to £1.50 at the last Board, but deferred a decision for trips into the Bag until additional information was available before making a decision.

Additional Information

11. For the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2004, the Yacht Taxi Service has been closely analysed:-

<u>Price</u>	<u>Trips</u>	<u>Income</u>
£1	17,676	£17,676.00 (Plus VAT)
£1.50	11,472	£17,208.00 (Plus VAT)
	Total (less VAT)	<u>£29,688.51</u>

12. To further assist Members to make an informed decision about taxi service rates and charges, a benchmark exercise has been carried out with other Ports and Harbours in the leisure sector.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Distance</u>
Dartmouth	£1.50	Between the Lower & Higher Ferries
	£2.00	Beyond the Ferries
Fowey	£1.50	Off the town
	£2.00	Mixtow Creek
	£3.00	Wisemans
Yarmouth (IOW)	£1.00	Off Town
Alderney	£2.00 (in) = £3.00 £1.00 (out)	Return trip
Falmouth	Free on visitors moorings off Town (included in Harbour Dues)	

13. The benchmark exercise clearly shows that the proposed increase from £1.50 to £2.00 to trips to the Bag would be competitive within the leisure ports sector.
14. Whilst undertaking the benchmarking exercise and discussing the issues with Harbour Staff who assist in the daily running of the service, a proposal was put forward by staff that the Board may also wish to consider.
15. It is suggested that a new charge for trips made beyond Tosnos Point, in the Bag be charged £3 out and £3 back. Whilst these trips only account for a minority made during the year by the yacht taxi but becomes out of mainstream service for an additional 15 – 20 minutes for a limited amount of income.

### **Risk Assessment**

16. The annual budget exercise by the Harbour Board provides Members with the task of not only preparing the budget for a break-even situation, it also provides the opportunity for Members to review the way services are delivered and ensure that delivery is cost-effective.

### **Human Rights Act**

17. There are no Human Rights issues arising from this report.

### **Conclusion**

18. The Harbour Board agreed at the last meeting to an increase for trips off the town from £1.00 to £1.50 and deferred a decision for trips to and from the Bag until additional information was provided. This report provides Members with a benchmarking exercise with those leisure ports that provide a similar yacht taxi service and it is clear that an increase from £1.50 to £2.00 to the Bag would be competitive.
19. It is also recommended to Members that a new charge for trips made beyond Tosnos Point is agreed and that a £3 charge each way is levied.
20. The Yacht Taxi Service is an essential facility offered to the visiting yachtsmen, extended to the resident Harbour user and as a service to the public it provides a limited ferry service to and from East Portlemouth. The service was provided in-house following a decision of the Harbour Board to ensure that a quality cost-effective service to the customer was available. The service has a high reputation and other ports and harbours look with envy at the Board's arrangements which, in the opinion of the Harbour Master, should remain the same.

Stephen Tooke  
Harbour Master

Salcombe Harbour Board  
30<sup>th</sup> November 2004

Paula Brooks  
Strategic Director (Operations)

### **Background Documents**

SH. 12/ 04,SH.45/ 99  
Salcombe Harbour Policy Document