

Salcombe Harbour Board – 31 March 2008**TOPICAL HARBOUR ISSUES****Report of Head of Service Salcombe Harbour****Statutory Powers: Pier and Harbour Order (Salcombe) Confirmation Act 1954**

Financial Implications: There are no new financial implications related to the issues raised within this report other than the revised manning arrangements for the forthcoming season. The additional overtime payments for this will be met from the current overtime budget.

Purpose

To update Members on the progress made against a number of operational projects within Salcombe Harbour. This report supports South Hams objectives: Retention of the District's Character (CP3), an accessible Council (CP5) and value for money (CP6).

Recommendation

That the Harbour Board RESOLVES to note the content of this report.

Duchy of Cornwall Lease Negotiations

1. Negotiations are progressing as approved by Harbour Board on 20 March 2007 (SH44/06). Heads of Terms for Agreement were agreed in August 2007. A draft lease was received from the Duchy of Cornwall's solicitors on 25 February which is being studied by the Council's Legal, Financial and Property Services Departments.

Revision of Bye-laws

2. In response to stakeholder feedback that excessive speed and the consequent wash was adversely affecting their enjoyment of the estuary, and to reduce the risk of serious injury resulting from a collision or capsize, the Harbour Board agreed on 12 November 2007 (SH 40/07) to work towards reducing the speed limit within the harbour to six knots. Feedback from informal consultation through the winter 2007 Newsletter highlighted the objections to this proposal, particularly from boat owners at Kingsbridge, for a blanket reduction to six knots. Therefore a revised proposal was forwarded to the DfT on 2 January 2008 which retains the eight knot speed limit with a six knot zone from the Marine Hotel to the Salt Stone and within the Kingsbridge Basin. Once a response has been received from the DfT the formal consultation process will commence.

Pontoons

3. The replacement Residents' Pontoon in Coad Cove approved by the Harbour Board on 20 March 2006 (SH42/06) was completed in January 2008 and will be formally opened by the Mayor of Salcombe on 13 May 2008.
4. The Batson Slipway Pontoon approved by Harbour Board on 25 September 2007 (SH31/07) was completed in early March 2008.
5. In addition, the berthing pontoons currently operated by Winters Marine are secured on chains. Winters Marine has indicated their intention to pile these pontoons next winter. This action will, over the life of the pontoons, reduce seabed scour from the chains and reduce the maintenance load, which is currently undertaken by the Harbour Moorings Team.

Marketing

6. The Strategic Business Plan identifies the reliance the Harbour Finances have on visiting yachts and the trend of reducing visiting yacht numbers. The cause of the reducing numbers is partially attributed to the value for money that visitors feel they get in Salcombe.
7. Following the freezing of visitor's charges for a second year and the introduction of a range of promotions, the Harbour has something tangible that can be marketed as addressing the visitor's value for money concerns.
8. Letters outlining the charges for visiting yachts, the range of discounts and the promotions agreed by the Harbour Board on 12 November 2007 have been sent to yacht clubs throughout the South West and a more general press release "Better Value Visits to Salcombe" has been sent to the boating press.
9. The affect of these limited marketing measures will be monitored throughout the forthcoming season, however it will take many years to rebuild Salcombe's reputation.

Opinion Meter Survey

10. Following the successful operation of an electronic opinion meter survey conducted in the Harbour office during August, the exercise will be repeated again this season from mid April to Mid May 2008. Questions set on the opinion meter aim to capture customers' views of their harbour 'customer experience'.

Annual Report

11. Drafting of the Annual report is progressing well and it should be presented at the Board meeting on 2 June 2008. This report will outline progress since the Board was re-constituted in 2006 and outline plans for the forthcoming year.
12. The Strategic Business Plan has a further four years to run, however, in order to ensure that planning continues to take account of changing circumstances, the Key Strategic Actions Appendix will be reviewed and distributed to the Harbour Community Fora for their comment and input to the longer term strategic planning of the Harbour's future.

Security Patrol

13. Members agreed at the Board Meeting on 14 January 2008 (SH50/07) to extend the current contract for a further year, conducting a market testing exercise in September 2008 for delivery of the service from April 2009 onwards. Since that decision was made the current contractor has given notice to terminate the contract on 1 May 2008. The process of appointing a new contractor is underway; there should be no gap in the service.
14. The Board also agreed (SH50/07) to encourage the development and extension of the Boat Watch scheme to complement the Harbour Authority and security patrols. We are currently waiting for the approval of our insurance company to allow volunteers to operate a harbour launch. When and if this is received, the intention is to advertise for volunteers to operate occasional daylight patrols to complement the activity of the Harbour Staff throughout the forthcoming season.

Fish Quay

15. For information, SHDC Property Services have commissioned an engineering consultant to conduct a condition survey of the Fish Quay.

Winter Storage Arrangements

16. For information, SHDC Property Services intend to advertise for expressions of interest for a suitable contractor to operate their asset from next winter onwards. (SH19/07, SH 28/07, SH 53/07).

Afloat Provisioning

17. The Harbour Board approved the development of an afloat provisioning service on 6 June 2007 (SH 9/07). Following a competitive tendering process the Board have granted the Salcombe Fishmongers a concession to provide a grocery delivery service from Easter 2008 for an initial period of two years. The Salcombe Fishmongers intend to deliver their own fresh and cooked fish and shellfish products as well as offering a range of goods from other local traders. The full extent of the service has still to be agreed.

Harbour Staff Manning Levels during Summer 2008

18. In order to improve the over The Strategic Business Plan identifies the reliance the Harbour Finances have on visiting yachts and the trend of reducing visiting yacht numbers. The cause of the reducing numbers is partially attributed to the value for money that visitors feel they get in Salcombe.
19. all service to Harbour's customers the permanent harbour staff have agreed to work a modified set of working arrangements which will provide additional cover over the weekends in the season.
20. Effectively this change will enable the Harbour Master and Assistant Harbour Masters to provide weekend cover during July and August. Workshop staff will also be providing weekend cover during July and August. This arrangement will incur overtime payments to staff below Head of Service which can be accommodated within the existing overtime budget.

21. There is no change to the Moorings Officer's working pattern. They will continue to work a shift arrangement from May to September to provide coverage 7 days a week from 0600 to 2300 hours. Equally there is no significant change to the office Administrative Assistants who will continue to provide office cover 7 days a week from May to September. However, to ensure more capacity is available the two office staff have agreed to overlap on Fridays and Saturdays.
22. Seasonal staff manning levels will be the same as during 2007; however the Whitestrand Pontoon Patrol hours will be extended to 2100 hours on Friday, Saturday and Sunday when there are two pontoon attendants on duty. On these occasions from 1300 to 1600 hours one of the pontoon patrols will operate a water taxi to provide additional coverage at a busy time of day.

Strategic Risk Assessment

| Opportunity | Issues / Obstacles | Benefits |
|---|---|---|
| The Harbour Authority is striving to deliver an improving service to harbour users. | The Harbour Board, through its contact with harbour Community Forums has identified a number of improvements which can benefit both resident and visiting yachtsmen and improve the reputation of Salcombe Harbour. | A better service in a safe environment for estuary users. |

Conclusion

23. There are a large number of actions currently being progressed which, it is hoped, demonstrates the Harbour Board and Harbour Team's commitment to providing a first class service to the users of Salcombe/Kingsbridge Estuary.

Ian Gibson
Head of Service Salcombe Harbour

Salcombe Harbour Board
 31 March 2008

Background Documents:

Strategic Business Plan 2007-2011, 1st Edition dated 2 August 2007.