

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SALCOMBE HARBOUR BOARD
HELD IN THE FUNCTION ROOM, CLIFF HOUSE, SALCOMBE
ON MONDAY 18 DECEMBER 2006**

MEMBERS

* Cllr J S Beer – Chairman

* Dr C Harling – Vice-Chairman

* Cllr J Brazil	* Mr J Barrett
* Cllr R J Carter	* Mr T Bass
* Cllr S L Rankin	* Mr R Gilbert
	∅ Mr H Marriage
	* Mr M O'Brien

* Denotes attendance

∅ Denotes apologies for absence

Officers in attendance:

All Agenda Items – Strategic Director (Operations), Head of Service (Salcombe Harbour)

Items 1, 2, 3 and 4 (minute reference SH.21/06, SH.22/06, SH.23/06 and SH.24/06 refers) – Members Support Services Manager

Officers in attendance for observation purposes:

Harbour Office Manager and Marine Conservation Officer

SH.21/06 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Salcombe Harbour Board held on 24 October 2006 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following changes:-

- that the response to question 4 (minute reference SH.14/06 refers) be amended to read; “In response it be noted that there were no plans to ration by price and, in any case, only 100% council tax payers were *in effect* eligible to a mooring.”
- That the working group established to address fees and changes, as detailed in SH.18/06 (b), be for the **2008/2009** period. The same amendment was also made under minute reference SH.21/06.

SH.22/06 URGENT BUSINESS

The Chairman announced that he had three items of urgent business he wished to raise at the meeting. These were recorded as follows:-

Dispensations for Board Members

The Member Support Services Manager informed the Board that dispensations had been received in respect of those Members who it was considered had a prejudicial interest in issues relating to fees and charges. It was anticipated that the Standards Committee would consider the applications for dispensation at its meeting of 3 January 2007.

Storm Report

The Harbour Master reported to the Board the storm damage caused on 3 December 2006. Due to culminating factors such as high south westerly winds, low pressure and spring tides, damage had been caused to various assets of the Harbour. Two house boats were washed off Batson. No significant structural damage had been caused and both had been re-floated and removed from the water for the winter period. A further house boat was damaged and consequently sank. The boat had been removed from the estuary and was waiting to be dismantled. In response to a question, the Harbour Master informed the Board that the cost of the works on these house boats would be borne by the house boat company.

Further consequences of storm damage included boats being pumped out and ropes replaced. The Harbour Master informed that all yachts were checked on a daily basis during harbour patrol. Boat owner's who persistently neglected their vessels, leaving the harbour patrol to attend to them, were to be contacted to ensure that they were aware of their responsibility for the maintenance of their own vessels.

Representation on the Harbour Community Forums

Following the previous meeting of the Board, at which appointments of Members to Harbour Community Forums were made (minute SH.15/06 refers), it had become apparent that Mr J Barrett was unable to continue as the representative for the Salcombe Kingsbridge Estuary Association (SKEA) by virtue of him also being the chairman of SKEA. It was therefore:-

RESOLVED

That Mr M O'Brien be appointed as the Board's Community Harbour Forum Representative for the Salcombe Kingsbridge Estuary Association

SH.23/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Members were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of the meeting but none was made.

SH.24/06 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Prior to hearing questions from the public, the Harbour Master advised that following Mr Stratton's question regarding the Batson Resident Compound (minute SH.14/06 (2) refers), he had since met with Mr Stratton to discuss proposals for the reorganisation of the compound. Following the discussions, the Harbour Master was happy to advise that the proposals regarding parking at the compound would be actioned.

Two members of the public attended the meeting to utilise the public question time session. Questions were recorded as follows:-

Question from Mr Graham Parker

- 1) What reassurance can I be given that it would not be more financially beneficial to not replace the residents' pontoons?

In response, it was noted that alternatives to replacing the residents' pontoons were explored but the reality was that the estuary did not have the capacity to adequately re-establish 60 moorings elsewhere. Some alternatives to the residents' pontoons, such as trot moorings, were looked at and although financially more viable to install initially, would have significant financial implications in the long term.

The Board would be addressing such issues however, during the strategic business planning process.

Question from Mr Peter Stratton

- 2) In respect of the contractors for the replacement of the residents' pontoon, concern was aired that although it was thought that the life of the new steel piles would be 25 years, what guarantee was there and what would happen if the contracted company went into liquidation?

In response it was noted that there was sufficient technological information on the piles to satisfy the Harbour Master that the steel would last for at least 25 years.

- 3) In relation to the Strategic Business Planning, Mr Stratton wanted reassurance that there would be a substantial public consultation process on the draft business plan. Mr Stratton's concerns laid with what impact changes may have on the aesthetic view of the estuary, especially in terms of it being in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Furthermore, it was requested that any further changes to the house boats be consulted upon with relevant stakeholders.

In response, Mr Stratton was informed that there would be a robust and lengthy public consultation period for the business plan, anticipated for June and July 2007. Furthermore, in the event of any specific projects to be developed in the estuary, plans would be made publicly available.

SH.25/06 **STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLANNING**

A report was considered which informed Members on the progress made following the workshop which was held on 14 November 2006, and to propose a way forward for completion of the first iteration of a Strategic Business Plan.

Highlighted from the report was the “key themes” which were validated as core principles to underpin the activities of the Harbour Authority:-

- Safety;
- Stakeholder Involvement;
- Value for Money;
- Environmental Stewardship;
- Catalyst for Sustainable Economic Development.

It was also noted that it was the intention that the plan be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure its validity and that it be updated where necessary.

The report concluded by saying that progress had begun towards achieving the Board’s vision of:

Retaining and enhancing the character of Salcombe and Kingsbridge Estuary whilst updating harbour facilities to meet the requirements and expectations of residents and visiting yachtsmen for the 21st century.

There was a long way yet to go but, providing the core principles were followed in setting the SMARTER (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely, Evaluated and Reviewed) objectives, discernable progress should follow.

The Board then proceeded to elect and agree Members on to the two working groups; Business Development and Operations and Safety, as noted in the published report. It was anticipated that the working groups would meet on 30 January 2007.

RESOLVED

That the Harbour Board:

- a) Endorse the work completed to date on the Salcombe Harbour Strategic Business Plan;
- b) Develop the embryonic plan into a rolling five year Strategic Business Plan for Salcombe Harbour;
- c) Appoint the following Members to the corresponding working group:-
Business Development; Cllrs Beer, Brazil, Carter and Rankin, and Messrs Barrett, Gilbert and O’Brien
Operations and Safety; Messrs Bass, Harling and Marriage.

SH.26/06 THE INTRODUCTION OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

A report was considered to establish agreed performance indicators (PIs) for Salcombe Harbour to enable the harbour to measure its performance and to present the Board with the information it required to make strategic decisions to support current operation and future investment.

The report concluded in saying that the implementation of performance management based upon realistic performance indicators, which were kept under constant review and reported regularly to the Harbour Board, would provide a powerful management tool to assist in decision making and policy development.

During discussion, particular reference was made to:-

- a) comments expressed on behalf of a Member who had sent his apologies to the meeting. It was reported to the Board that the Member wished to express that in his belief the target for investigations for both PI SH02 (defects to harbour infrastructure) and SH09 (mooring failure) be expanded to two days, as opposed to the 24 hours noted in the published report. However, the Harbour Master was satisfied with 24 hours and it was his belief that such issues should be investigated as a matter of urgency;
- b) in relation to SH37 (water taxi), a Member noted that it would be beneficial to have a benchmark figure to add to the target an increase in passenger numbers;
- c) in relation to SH22 (health and safety incidents and accidents), a Member felt that it would be challenging to reduce figures by 10% year on year. It may be more beneficial to maintain a particular level of health and safety;
- d) Members' concern over the absence of environmental PI's, such as water quality and beach quality. It was suggested that the Harbour Master and the Conservation Officer liaise to discuss further;
- e) a Members' request that the conduct of estuary users also be monitored.

RESOLVED

That the Harbour Board:

- a) Endorse the introduction of the proposed PIs;
- b) Have the PIs reported as a standing agenda item at each Board meeting.

SH.27/06 **NORMANDY PONTOON**

A report was considered which informed Members of the urgent requirement to conduct repairs to the Normandy pontoon piles. A survey had been conducted using ultra-sonic equipment to measure the extent of any corrosion below the waterline. The initial visual survey had revealed extensive corrosion which had weakened the piles and therefore the integrity of the facility.

Normandy Pontoon was an integral part of the harbour infrastructure, without which it would be impossible to facilitate visiting yachtsmen with freshwater, berthing for their tenders and time limited town access to restore provisions. As such, the most effective solution for the medium to long term was to repair the piles by replacement, in association with the proposed Residents' pontoon project, as detailed in the agenda.

The Harbour Master had received a quote from the preferred bidder for the proposed Residents' pontoon project in the region of £18,000, it was also confirmed that they would be able to carry out the repairs during April 2007.

For clarification purposes an amendment to the recommendation in the presented report was **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED** and on being put to the vote was declared **CARRIED**:-

RESOLVED

That the Harbour Board:-

- a) **RECOMMEND** to Council that standing orders relating to contracts be suspended in respect of the awarding of a contract for urgent repairs to the Normandy pontoon piles and that the work be carried out by the contractor for the proposed Residents' pontoon project (minute SH.30/06 refers);
- b) Note the requirement to repair Normandy Pontoon Piles;
- c) Agree the expenditure be met from harbour reserves.

SH.28/06 **SALCOMBE FISH QUAY INCIDENT**

A report was considered which presented the findings of the Harbour Master's Investigation into the Fish Quay incident on 11 September 2006 which resulted in a vehicle running away down the slipway into the estuary whilst loading crab. The incident could have had serious, if not fatal consequences. The investigation concluded that it was almost certainly caused by operator error in that the handbrake was not applied correctly, or the chock was not inserted or was inadequate for the task. The report concluded in saying that direct involvement in fish quay activities by the Harbour Master was essential if a safe working environment was to be maintained. Furthermore, the Harbour

Authority's risk assessment for slipways and landings was incomplete and required revisions. The Harbour Master had asked the fishermen to produce a Code of Practice for the Harbour Master to endorse.

In conclusion, it was noted that the next proposed cause of action would be to carry out risk assessments on the public slipways.

RESOLVED

That the Harbour Board note the findings and endorse the recommendation to:

- a) Formalise a safe system of work to be employed by fishermen operating on the fish quay and slipway to include transferring crab from storage boxes to road vehicles;
- b) Review the Harbour risk assessments.

SH.29/06 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business as the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act is involved.

SH.30/06 THE RESIDENTS' PONTOON REPLACEMENT PROJECT

An exempt report was considered which updated the Board on the progress with the Residents' Pontoon project and to gain approval to proceed with the preferred tender with a project completion date of December 2007.

During consideration of the report, the Board looked at each tender proposal noting the two preferred bidders. Both of the preferred bidders advised of the need for test bores to establish the depth of the piles. The preferred bidders had informed the Harbour Master that it could carry out the test bores during April 2007 and would hold the quotation price for the contract until autumn 2007. Members were concerned that the test bores may result in the price being raised but officers reassured that carrying out the test bores did not bind the Harbour to use that company.

Further discussion amongst Members included reference being made to the use of seaflex and cathodic protection for the piles.

In conclusion, an amendment was **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED** and on being out to a vote, was declared **CARRIED**. It was therefore:-

RESOLVED

That the Harbour Board:-

- a) Note the progress made with the Residents' Pontoon replacement project;
- b) Approve the proposal to conduct test bores for the Residents' pontoon project in order to properly establish the nature of the ground and that the proposed contractor for the test bores be WALCON;
- c) Instruct the Harbour Master to investigate further the use and cost of Seaflex prior to a final design being agreed.

(Meeting commenced at 2.30 pm and concluded at 4.30 pm).

Chairman