

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SALCOMBE HARBOUR BOARD
HELD IN THE LIBRARY, CLIFF HOUSE, SALCOMBE
ON TUESDAY, 25 JANUARY 2005**

MEMBERS

* Cllr J S Beer - Chairman

∅ Mr R Wheeler - Vice-Chairman

∅ Cllr H D Bastone	* Mr T Bass
∅ Cllr J Brazil	∅ Mr G Foale
∅ Cllr R J Carter	* Mr R Gilbert
* Cllr P H Cook	* Dr P Goldsworthy
* Cllr C M Pannell	∅ Ms L. Heape
* Cllr S L Rankin	* Mr P Howard
* Cllr G Rothwell	* Mr E Johnson
* Cllr D W S Thorning	* Mr Frank Smith
* Cllr A R Vale	

* Denotes attendance

∅ Denotes apology for absence

SH.32/04 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 30 November 2004 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

SH.33/04 **SALCOMBE HARBOUR BOARD: STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN**

The Chairman advised Members that he intended to introduce as an item of urgent business the establishment of a Steering Group to progress a strategic business plan for the Harbour Board.

This item was considered urgent because of the desire for work on the plan to be initiated in order for the Board to be able to consider a draft at its meeting on 15 March 2005.

It was agreed that the Steering Group would comprise three District Councillors and two co-opted members.

Following a request for District Council nominations, the following Members were **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED** and subsequently confirmed without a ballot: Cllrs Beer, Rankin and Vale.

There being three nominations for the two co-opted members, a ballot was held following which Mr Gilbert and Mr Howard were declared appointed to the Steering Group.

RESOLVED

That a Steering Group comprising Cllrs Beer, Rankin, Vale, Mr Gilbert and Mr Howard be established to progress work on the Harbour Board's Strategic Business Plan with a view to presenting a draft document to the 15 March 2005 meeting of the Board.

SH.34/04 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of the meeting. These were recorded as follows:-

Cllr Cook, Messrs Bass, Goldsworthy and Howard declared a personal interest in item 5 'Review of Charges' (see minute SH.35/04 below) by virtue of their rental of moorings within the Harbour. The Members remained during discussion on the item and participated in the vote.

SH.35/04 REVIEW OF CHARGES (SH.26/04 & SH.28/04 refer)

A report was considered which had been prepared to assist Members to set the Harbour rates and charges for 2005/2006. Based on the Board's consideration of the revenue budget for 2005/2006 at its 30 November 2004 meeting, the Harbour Master had reviewed the harbour charges in accordance with minute SH.26/04, which required an average increase of 2.95%.

The report highlighted the practice which had been employed, of rounding up certain over the counter charges to the nearest 5p or 10p for ease of administration and drew attention to the new charges having been constructed to reflect the Board's decision on charging bands (minute SH.28/04 refers). It was noted that the revised charges would generate additional income of £16,500 and would absorb previously identified budget pressures (minute SH.26/04 refers).

The proposed new charges and a comparison with current charges were set out in Appendices A and B to the report presented to the Board.

Finally, the report made reference to the Board's consideration at the November 2004 meeting visitor charges and its recommendation for the charges to be levied on a seasonal basis as opposed to monthly (minute SH.28/04 refers). On further reflection, the Harbour Master proposed that this seasonal charge become an annual permit in line with the charging regime for residents. The rationale behind this proposal was the practical concern that customers arriving outside the season would not be covered by an appropriate charge.

RECOMMENDED

That the Council be **RECOMMENDED** that:-

- (i) the proposed charges as set out in Appendix B to the report presented to the Board (and attached to the minutes) be approved for implementation from 1 April 2005;
- (ii) the seasonal charging of visitors entering the estuary via the slipway now becomes an annual permit.

SH.36/04 **SLIPWAY MANAGEMENT (SH.28/04 refers)**

Consideration was given to a report on the findings of the informal working group set up by the Board to review the management of the slipway in Batson Boat Park (minute SH.28/04 refers).

The Chairman asked that his gratitude be recorded to all the Members of the informal working party for their hard work and very thorough investigation of this matter.

The report reminded Members that the informal working group had been established following research undertaken on behalf of the Board by Royal Yachting Association (RYA) representatives. The research concerned the usage and movements of launches on and off the slipway and potential health and safety implications.

The report provided a summary of the informal working party's discussions and set out specific recommendations for the Harbour Board and the Council's Business Board with responsibilities for car and boat parking to consider.

Particular reference was made in the report to:-

- (a) the day to day control of all slipways and landings within Salcombe Harbour residing with the Harbour Master, although the revenue associated with the slipway, quays, landings and boat parks was credited to the Council's General Fund and not to the Harbour Board's ring-fenced account;
- (b) the working party's view that Batson Boat Park and the slipway constituted integral elements of customers' experience in the enjoyment of the estuary;
- (c) the discussions with the Council's Business Board responsible for boat parking aimed at aligning services for the benefit of the user;

(d) the progress of the Council's Asset Management Group towards implementing a number of modifications to the Boat Park, amongst which included the following:-

- traffic management arrangements;
- relocation of the Boat Park hut to alleviate traffic congestion;
- realignment of visitor spaces;
- resurfacing of the public slipway;
- the refurbishment of the water supply at the top of the slipway.

(e) the working party's recommendations to the Harbour Board and the Council's Business Board, which included:-

- redeployment of the second Boat Park Attendant during peak demand periods to manage the slipway;
- the zoning of the slipway to keep pedestrians and vehicles apart;
- introduction of a time limit on Batson slipway;
- improved information to customers, particularly with regard to alternative launching sites;
- the investigation of alternative delivery methods involving the commercial/private sector.

Members were advised that the recommendations and new arrangements should be in place by Easter 2005.

RESOLVED

That:-

1. the work of the informal working party be noted and those involved be thanked for their efforts;
2. the Chairman of the Harbour Board and the Harbour Master be asked to request a meeting with the Chairman of the Council's relevant Business Board to discuss the implementation of the working party's recommendations as detailed in paragraph 8 of the report presented to the Board.

SH.37/04 TOPICAL HARBOUR ISSUES

A report was considered which informed Members of any interesting current or future issues that might affect the Salcombe Harbour Board or Salcombe Harbour Kingsbridge Estuary.

In the report, the following matters were highlighted:-

- (a) **Sewage Incidents** – subsequent to a recent sewage spillage, when certain working practices employed by South West Water appeared to fail, the Harbour Master and Marine Conservation Officer had requested the opportunity to inspect these practices with a view to seeking their update if appropriate.

The incident in December 2004 resulted in the suspension of the dredging of scallops. The ban was lifted on 6 February 2005 after further testing.

- (b) **Devon Estuary Forum** – praise from Devon County Council's Emergency Planning Officer for the Salcombe Harbour Authority for its role in making the Oil Booming exercise a success.

In response to the Environment Agency's warning that to all Harbour Authorities that enforcement action would be taken against any authorities shown to be negligent in the management of pollution prevention, the report advised Members that the Marine Conservation Officer had been encouraging a tightening up of these activities for some time. Work was in progress to improve available facilities etc, for which there would be as yet uncertain cost implications.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

SH.38/04

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

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 8 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act is involved.

SH.39/04

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT: INVESTIGATION OF POLICY – RESERVATION FEES FOR BOAT PARKING

An exempt report was considered which detailed the results of an investigation by Internal Audit into the policy for charging reservation fees for both harbour facilities and boat parking.

During the discussion, Members supported the view that the contents of the report provided an impetus to undertake a review of the budget process as part of the remit of the Steering Group established to work on the strategic business plan (see minute SH.33/04 above).

RESOLVED

That:-

- (i) the Council's Business Board (Leisure, Car Parks and Markets) be invited to undertake a joint review of the timing of requests for confirmation of retention of facilities and the Harbour Board's recommended charges for the new season; and
- (ii) the Council's Business Board (Leisure, Car Parks and Markets) be also invited to meet with the Harbour Board to consider the options for establishing a co-ordinated approach to all aspects of the management of like facilities in Salcombe.

(Meeting commenced at 2.30 pm and concluded at 3.15 pm).

Chairman