

Minutes
Whitby Harbour Users Group
20 February 2025
Whitby Harbour Office

Present:

Bob Bennett BB
Chris Bourne CB
Howard Fields HF
David Wall DW
Adrian Fusco AF
Cllr. Mark Crane MC
Paul Hobson PH
David Moore DM
Gary Pearson GP
James Cole JC
Sandra Turner ST
Sally Atkinson SA
Sam Whitfield SWW
Wendy MacFarlane – note taker

		Action
1.	<p>Welcome, Introductions & Apologies:</p> <p>PH opened the meeting.</p> <p>Introductions were done to welcome new members.</p> <p>Apologies: James Buck Linda Wild</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of last meeting:</p> <p>The notes of the last meeting were reviewed.</p> <p>Most items discussed previously were on the agenda.</p> <p>Matters arising</p> <p>PH Election of new Chairperson. Adrian Fusco nominated, elected and took the Chair.</p>	

	<p>GP Terms of Reference review is ongoing. Expecting a new PMSC with new guidance on governance, once PMSC reviewed, this will be used as part of the ToR review process.</p> <p>DM Flags in the ablutions block are acting as mirrors when it's dark leading to lack of privacy.</p> <p>SW This is ongoing with asset management along with the standard of cleaning and a request for a deep clean.</p>	
3.	<p>Fishing Industry:</p> <p>No report.</p> <p>JC asked what of the required work the funding for the fish quay would cover.</p> <p>CB Works to replace 12 steels and 10 timbers should bring back into use 200 linear metres of quayside. Work will be prioritised to repair the worst and then incremental. A survey of the steel piles underneath has shown there are no issues so it will only be the facing areas that need work.</p> <p>DM Damage has partly been caused by bigger boats in bad weather knocking into the quayside. Could a refuge area be identified in the upper harbour to prevent future damage?</p> <p>GP Harbour staff will manage future arrivals to prevent wear & tear.</p> <p>MC asked when the works would commence.</p> <p>CB subject to sea & weather conditions the work boat, Rebecca M, will arrive on 14 March and work with Transcore to hopefully complete 8 April.</p> <p>AF asked if the fish figures report would be reinstated as part of future meetings.</p> <p>CB Going forward the figures shared at the previous Council Exec will then be reported to the Harbour User Group.</p> <p>GP asked for clarification on the windfarm compensation and their impact on our landings.</p> <p>JC gave a brief update that lobster landings were up whereas crab landings were down. Windfarms are impacting on figures due to die off, exclusion zones displacing boats so there's less area but more boats and where boats can prove losses they are being compensated by the windfarms so don't need to land previous quantities.</p> <p>BB asked if Russian crabs were impacting on catches.</p> <p>JC no impact we don't have Russian crabs in our waters.</p>	

	<p>ST asked how many shellfish boats we have landing.</p> <p>JC approximately 20</p> <p>CB fed back news on the 2025-26 fees, specifically that it has been agreed that the shellfish percentage will drop from 4 to 3 %.</p> <p>JC fed back that this was welcomed but some had reservations that this would reduce harbour revenue and therefore impact on investment in harbour improvement. 3% is in line with other local marinas.</p> <p>CB the hope is that the reduction will encourage more landings and increase revenue. Then asked about lack of prawn landings and if this was due to the price and availability of ice ?</p> <p>JC said the lack of larger quantities and the price of ice is an issue although resolving this wouldn't necessarily raise prawn landings as some boats don't like to be tied to the fish merchant that provided the ice. More of a priority is bait & freezer storage.</p>	
4.	<p>Port Marine Safety Code:</p> <p>GP There has been 2 incidents, 1 during the last meeting and another since.</p> <p>PH person-in-water incident, a shoreman that was helping passengers disembark collapsed into the water. He was subsequently OK, no reason has been found for his collapse and he has since retired.</p> <p>GP second incident was a large vessel that moored alongside the dredger. Conditions caused the vessel to pin the dredger to the harbour wall and caused damage to the dredger's railings and structural damage to the harbour.</p> <p>MAIB, the latest review will be reflected in our updated risk assessments. Flyer shared with meeting.</p> <p>PMSC we're expecting the review to bring an update to the Guide to Good Practice. It's anticipated it will take around 6 months to go through the new PMSC and we'll then review and update in line with this. PMSC is also changing it's name to Port Facilities Safety Code to make it relevant to smaller ports.</p> <p>CB raised the latest health check.</p> <p>GP said we'd passed and on the whole it was positive. 9 of the areas were green with just one amber and zero red.</p> <p>CB the amber was around the need for the designated person to be someone not directly line managed by the Duty Holder so we are looking to move this role to someone else.</p> <p>ST asked if the 10 areas could be shared for a better understanding and a reference when talking with users.</p>	

	<p>JC safety request for dark mornings, the leading lights are out and can make it difficult to see ahead, can the pier wall (white lights) be replaced/repared to assist with navigation?</p> <p>GP red and green lights are a navigational requirement.</p> <p>Action GP to look into repair of white lights. Post meeting note – light on the post near the Angel to be checked/repared for security of boats mooring nearby. GP to ask watch for a report on the light as it's possibly to do with highways switch off.</p> <p>JC asked about the foghorn – it is repared.</p>	GP
5.	<p>Harbour Maintenance & Infrastructure Projects:</p> <p>Fish Quay already covered.</p> <p>CB Cheftan & Helen Wycherley have both now left the harbour. An outline of the finances & savings for the removal of Cheftan was given.</p> <p>JC asked if HW would be allowed back once restored.</p> <p>CB said not. The replacement of capstans is ongoing.</p> <p>ST praised the work done to date.</p> <p>GP added that they are hoping to have one in working order to demonstrate the use.</p> <p>CB work on the new Hub is due to start 7 April and will take about a year to complete. The carpark will close to visitors on 31 March to allow preparation of the site. Plans were shared with the group and parking, storage, traffic flow discussed. The traffic route will be 10m wide to allow for larger vehicle access and there's a further 7m to the quay edge. Processes for fuel and permits are being looked into.</p> <p>GP & JC will work together to move the pots ahead of the work. Weather permitting most of the pots will go out to sea. A good opportunity to clear the broken & abandoned.</p> <p>GP we will be taking a strong stance on pots that are deemed abandoned. CB the harbour team have already taken these steps at Filey and will continue to tidy up Scarborough & Whitby.</p> <p>CB asked that, if there are any issues with the contractors, these are brought to the harbour office for the harbour to manage the situation.</p> <p>ST asked what interest there had been in the building.</p> <p>CB replied there are 2 organisations interested and ready to sign. That it is hard to get an agreement to lease agreed when the building work hasn't started. The Hubs future is looking very positive.</p>	

JC raised the permits, allocated spaces and potential displacement.

DM asked about potential impact on the already busy Marina Permit Area

CB will leave the permits and logistics with GP.

They are looking at the possibility of bus relays from the Abbey Car Park for the displaced visitor parking. This has been successful in the past.

Cost checks for the Parkol work will be going to the Council Exec to request the funding with a view to work starting May/June. Parkol work will move temporarily to the Endeavour Wharf.

SA raised concerns that a later start date will have an impact on a large new build project they are due to undertake. SA to liaise with Martin Lloyd.

GP the good news is that work that has needed doing is now getting done albeit that it is now all happening at once. We are now going into a very busy and disruptive period that will hopefully all be completed in 12 months. He thanked users for their understanding and asked for them to continue to work with us during the upheaval.

DM asked that users, particularly berth holders, be kept informed, perhaps by group email/newsletter. He feels people are more inclined to help if they know what is planned.

ST asked about the dredger

GP we now have the dredger back under our management and working in Scarborough as their licence is in place. There is 1-2 months of work left in Scarborough and it's hoped Whitby's licence will then be in place and work can begin here. Samples have been sent so we are hopeful the licence won't take too much longer. Priority will always be home ports before external contracts.

CB clarified this is the 2nd sample request. The MMO came back with a second sampling plan. Their questions have become a lot more scientific, luckily, we have a staff member that has worked in this field and their help has been enlisted with the applications. It is possible the MMO are being more diligent following the shellfish die off.

GP said we are not alone other areas are struggling or have had licences refused.

SA asked if Parkol could be a dredger priority to help with stability of vessels they are working on.

GP said there will be a soundings survey to identify priority areas. Berths and the channel will be dredged too.

ST asked about a general tidy up of the grounds around the harbour. There is some equipment near Coates Marine that is unsightly and has been there ages. Also are we aware of building work further up the river (just before the gas works)?

Action:

	<p>GP to arrange a boat trip up the river to investigate and take action as required.</p> <p>BB asked for clarity on the movement of the pontoons, he's heard from 2 differing sources of information. GP Martin Lloyd has said "one short pontoon to move". SWW has been asked not to allocate any vacant berths on the drying pontoon this season so there is space for displaced boats.</p> <p>DM asked if as part of the planned work a piling could be put in at the north end of Parkol to help with tidal movement.</p> <p>CB there's an additional cost for temporary work and another solution is available.</p> <p>DM asked if there was a continuity plan for the dredger licences.</p> <p>CB we are committed to never being in this position again.</p> <p>JC asked about tonnage and if the restriction would allow for adequate removal of build up.</p> <p>GP provided clarification, the tonnage is over the term of the licence (3yrs) so we can remove more in the first year and still be within the limits overall. Reiterated our harbours come first.</p> <p>AF asked about dredging the pontoon areas.</p> <p>GP these will be done around the tide issues. Holders will be kept informed, possibly by holding mini meetings to plan for berth holder's help in moving vessels.</p> <p>DM said that with sufficient notice berth holders are on board with helping.</p> <p>GP said that once we've surveyed we can plan so that advance notice is given.</p> <p>DM what about areas the dredger can't do.</p> <p>GP we are looking at alternate methods and costs for these areas including possible water injection methods. There is 10yrs of build up in some areas.</p> <p>DM raised concerns over the strain on the west pontoon.</p> <p>GP dredging isn't the entire solution to this, some of the issue is the spring tides and their affect on the pontoons.</p> <p>JC added the tides we've seen over the last year have been bigger than he's ever seen before.</p>	GP
6.	Harbour Strategy:	

	<p>CB The former SBC strategies have expired. We are starting anew and CB is picking up from where the Partner Meetings left off in 2023 when the meetings stopped due to staff changes. Notes from these meetings will be used to draft a strategy that will be shared with users to feed back into. There will be a consultation period ahead of the strategy being taken to the Area Committee. It will then be put to public consultation, reviewed and submitted to the Exec for adoption. This is expected to take approx. one year.</p>	
7.	<p>Any other business:</p> <p>ST asked if there was an update on the court case ?</p> <p>CB no judgment has been given yet. Assurance was given that whatever the outcome the operation of the harbour would not be affected. If funding is needed it will be sought, only the pot that pays for it may change. The ruling should give clarity on who is responsible for the land management.</p> <p>HF Is there a date for the waiting pontoons going back in?</p> <p>GP Normally this would be just before the start of the season but with the planned pile works it will be after the work is completed (late April).</p> <p>DM asked if the stability/bouyancy of the pontoons was being looked into as they are quite “tippy” especially under wash from moving vessels.</p> <p>GP said we may need to look at another location, the pontoon can’t be widened for stability as it would block vessel access.</p> <p>DM can we look at resolving the issue with the temporary parking to load/off load on Church Street. It is single white lined and other vehicles are blocking it.</p> <p>SWW has spoken to parking and they are looking into the legality and enforcement options.</p> <p>GP we will involve highways if the markings need to be altered.</p> <p>AF asked about arranging the extra bridges for yacht club events DM asked about these for the boating association.</p> <p>GP said we need to look carefully at what we can offer as it has significant cost implications and a knock on effect for the staff working hours.</p> <p>A discussion was held around types of vessel, the weather, tides and reasons for extra bridges.</p> <p>Action:</p> <p>GP & WM to look at the requested extra bridges and the feasibility & costs with a view to finding a solution that suits everyone.</p> <p>DM the new electric points are very hard to read and the one near his boat had failed to work after replacement taking a long time to resolve.</p>	GP/WM

	<p>A discussion followed, this is ongoing and necessary work. Electric isn't guaranteed and we are working with limited staffing resources. Were there other meters that could be used.</p> <p>CB suggested concerns be taken away and worked on.</p>	
8.	<p>Date of next meeting: Future dates have already been set, the next being 29th May at 2pm. The venue has been changed to the RNLI to allow for more space.</p>	