



**COWES HARBOUR  
COMMISSION**

**PUBLIC REPORT  
COWES HARBOUR COMMISSION  
26 APRIL 2024**

Present: Phil Hagen – Chairman (PH)  
James Evans – Deputy Chairman (JE)  
Vanessa Clifford (VC)  
Fiona Fitzherbert-Brockholes (FF-B)  
Clive Blount (CB) Jason  
Losty (JL) Steve Sheridan  
(SS) Mark Bew (MB)  
Rupert MacInnes (RM)  
Gary Hall (GH) – Chief Executive

In Attendance: Roger Parrott (RP) - Finance Manager

**1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Declarations of Interest and Declarations of Related Party Transactions for Cowes Harbour Commissioners are documented on the CHC website.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Jon Kidd (JK) – Harbour Master.

**3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on Friday, 8 March 2024 having been sent out it was resolved that they be signed as a true and complete record of business transacted.

**4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES**

- (a) Island Ribs – GH confirmed that they have now vacated the buildings.
- (b) New occupiers have been identified for the units vacated by Islands Ribs.
- (c) Annual Report – Nosy Creative Agency have just completed the filming and it is hoped that the first edited version will be available shortly for review.
- (d) The issue with the stump at the RORC has now been fixed although this may have recently been hit so GH will look into this.
- (e) The PMSC audit is now close to completion.
- (f) CHC's 'Seamark' vessel has been sold and the vessel 'Sea Warrior' has now been purchased and has arrived at Kingston.
- (g) CHC did not produce the Cowes Harbour Handbook this year as the WebApp now holds the information plus a Tide and Time leaflet which gives basic information for sailors. However, the company that produced the previous Handbook have gone ahead and teamed up with Cowes Town Council (CTC) to produce a Cowes Handbook, which is out on the streets. GH has heard that some of the advertisers who paid for the CTC handbook thought they were buying into CHC's handbook.

- (h) Floating Bridge – GH reported that he and JK have met with two Council officers who are leading the project to replace this. It was a very positive meeting and they acknowledged fully that throughout the project they will keep CHC informed of progress.
- (i) Declarations – some of these are still outstanding and GH requested that these be forwarded to him as soon as possible.

## **5. HARBOUR MASTER'S SAFETY REPORT**

The HM report and safety analysis was circulated with the papers for the meeting and was fully considered by the Board. GH highlighted the following:

- (a) The safety topic this month offered advice on Essential Safety Information.
- (b) Regarding a recent incident with a motor boat that went into the Shrape, there were four occupants on board all of whom were injured and hospitalized, one seriously. The boat was found in Gosport. Currently, there are three still remaining in hospital. The MCA will not be taking any further action. Four of the CHC'S General Directions were broken so CHC could make the decision to prosecute.
- (c) At the last CHAC meeting, an issue was raised about the use of kill-cords suggesting that as a harbour authority, CHC should make the wearing of kill-cords mandatory. Whilst policing this would be extremely difficult, GH wanted to make the Board aware that it had been raised. GH confirmed that CHC will continue to go down the education route, and Patrol Officers will challenge if they see kill-cords not being worn.
- (d) GH reported that an urgent replacement of six piles now needs to be undertaken. This issue had not previously been brought to the attention of CHC and it was felt that the recent appointment of a maintenance person will ensure that problems will be more easily and quickly discovered and dealt with.

## **6. CEO REPORT**

The CEO report was circulated with the papers for the meeting and was fully considered by the Board. GH highlighted the following:

- (a) The Sugar Store opening went well on Good Friday, with a good turnout of around 80 people. Feedback was very positive.
- (b) PH asked about the booking level for Shepard's during Cowes Week, which is currently at 50%, and GH confirmed that this is about the same as it was this time last year. It is likely to increase significantly nearer the time.
- (c) JL asked about the rectification work on the electrics at Shepard's following the flooding which turned out to be a large job. It is likely to cost just over £2k to put right.

## **7. FINANCE REPORT FOR JANUARY 2024**

Copies of the Financial Management Report for January 2024 were circulated with the papers for the meeting and fully considered by the Board.

## **8. ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY REPORT**

The Environment and Sustainability Report was received and fully discussed by the Board

## **9. CHAC MEETING 17 April 2024**

CB reported on the meeting and commented on how well managed the meeting was. It was positive and useful to pick up the change of mood which is much less combative and has a more collegiate feel. Apart from the kill-cord issue (discussed earlier), there was some discussion on plans for Bells Landing in East Cowes. CB felt that with the plans set to include paddle-boarding, kayaking, swimming and such like, CHC will need to be aware of an increasing safety issue on that side of the harbour if it is to be set up

as a public access leisure landing. CB asked for any items for discussion to be sent to him and he will propose them to Mark Southwell (Chair) ahead of the next meeting in September.

#### **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

a) SS asked if an update was available on PH and GH's proposed West Country visit. As discussed at the last Board meeting, they will be heading to Falmouth Harbour Authority and Dartmouth, who have put forward an excellent list of things they would like to discuss which were similar to those of CHC. PH's vision is that it would be good to work with one or two other harbour authorities with possibly yearly meetings to discuss strategies and plans. Another suggestion has also been put forward for an Isle of Wight Harbour get-together as there are many general discussions that the harbours are involved in as they are all local. PH and GH will report to the Board at the next meeting on how the visit went.

b) PH informed the Board that it must have a Deputy Chair. It is JE's last meeting today and as discussed with Board members, PH has asked SS if he will become the Deputy Chair for this coming year, and he has agreed to do this.

c) On behalf of the Harbour Commission, PH gave thanks to JE who has provided excellent counsel to them over two full terms in office. PH said that he knew David Riley had appreciated everything that JE had brought to the role and PH confirmed that it has been a pleasure working with him. PH thanked him for his time and that he will be missed around the table.

There being no other matters for discussion, the meeting closed at 11.42.

#### **Date of next meeting:**

**Friday 7 June 2024 at 10.00, Harbour Office, Cowes, Isle of Wight**