



**COWES HARBOUR  
COMMISSION**

**PUBLIC REPORT  
COWES HARBOUR COMMISSION  
25 October 2024**

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

In Attendance: Jon Kidd (JK) – Harbour Master  
Roger Parrott (RP) - Finance Director

**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**

There were no apologies for absence.

**3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on Friday, 6 September 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. **Fuel Berth Incident-** PH reported ongoing difficulties in communication with Police Commissioner Donna Jones regarding the fuel berth incident. After PH indicated his intent to escalate the matter to the IOPC, Inspector Hercocock contacted JK but avoided PH. Despite PH's further emails to Donna Jones highlighting the lack of communication and requesting direct contact, no response has been received other than another visit by Inspector Kev to JK. Given the potential severity of the incident, PH intends to continue

pursuing engagement at a strategic level. Meanwhile, JK will propose a roundtable meeting with the Marine Police and local Police to address the issues at a tactical level and encourage collaboration.

- b. **Clipper Race 2026** - GH shared that the Clipper Race team believe CHC's budget projections are high and have requested a meeting. Revised figures are awaited, but GH noted that 2026 will be a busy year in Cowes with several large regattas, none of which have requested event fees. SS recommended GH contact IWC and Cowes Town Council to explore potential funding support, as IWC has previously contributed to major sporting events. GH will follow up once revised figures are available.
- c. **Categorisation of Waters** - The wave monitor has been performing well, providing promising results in the past week.
- d. **Business Continuity Statement** - CB suggested setting a target date for the completion of the Business Continuity Statement. PH agreed to provide updated information and a timeline at the next Board meeting.
- e. **PMSC Audit Report** - The PMSC Audit Report has been received, and all observations have been actioned. The Board discussed the existence of a training register for Board members, which JK will review. It was also agreed to hold a meeting with Martin Phipps to discuss the new PMSC Code after a Board meeting, likely post-May 2025.
- f. **Marina Layout Plans** - GH reported that a harbour safety risk assessment has been completed and approved by CHC's Designated Person, the planning application process to link the marina access walkway to Bells Landing has commenced, a report has been commissioned to assess potential tide or wave impacts, dredging is scheduled to begin in July 2025, and the project is expected to be completed by April 2026. Presentations to East Cowes Town Council and Cowes Town Council were well-received.
- g. **Kingston** - GH expects the full tender report next week and will meet with MB to review it. A detailed update will be provided at the next Board meeting.
- h. **Fuel Pumps** - The replacement of two fuel pumps has been included in the 5-Year Plan, with replacements anticipated next year.

## 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. JK highlighted the following:

- a. This month's safety topic offered advice on winterisation of boats and a reminder of heading out in inclement weather.
- b. Monthly Incident Analysis – the number of incidents is dropping as visitor numbers decrease.
- c. Pilotage acts are down by about 20 for the year. As discussed previously, there is not much that can be done about this.
- d. Scallop and clam dredging in the Medina – following a request from a commercial fisherman to consider a dispensation, JK has declined the request on the basis that there is a risk of gear being lost and potentially restricting the safe movement of vessels. The Board supports JK's decision to decline the request.
- e. JK updated the Board on the whereabouts of the recent problem boaters.
- f. PMSC Audit – work will start in January on a review of all statutory documents some of which will come before the Board for approval. JK explained the reasons behind the delay in the production of the PMSC report, and that the next Audit has already been programmed in.

## **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. Sugar Store – Eazibar has agreed to run the Sugar Store for the next year. Thursday evenings numbers are low, but it is popular for screening sporting events and has also hosted some weddings.
- b. Trellis Works – The CCTV and Wi-Fi technology is old so GH and JK have met with Trellis Works and asked them to submit a proposal to upgrade the system within a phased development program over a five-year period.

## **7. FINANCE REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 2024 and 2025 Budget Papers**

Copies of the Financial Management Reports for September 2024 and Budget Papers 2025 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.

- a. Saltmarsh restoration - The MMO is signing off licences slowly for disposal but are struggling with those trying to do sustainable dredging. There is some progress however with the Saltmarsh project.
- b. Oyster restoration – Sue Hawley and Luke from BLUE Marine and trying to obtain adult oysters for the cages although there has been some difficulty in getting hold of these. The oysters are being monitored although there has been a change of staff at UKSA.

## **9. CHAC MEETING**

CB confirmed that the next meeting will be held on Wednesday 8 January 2025 at 10.00.

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- i. **CHC Chair 2025** – PH informed the Board that his first term as Chair will conclude on 30 April 2025. Commissioners will need to decide on the Chair for the subsequent term. PH expressed his willingness to continue for a second term if elected, emphasising that the decision rests solely with the Commissioners.

The re-election process, which PH will not participate in, will be managed by GH as Chief Executive. GH will initiate the process by writing to the Commissioners to determine whether they wish to re-elect PH or put themselves forward for the position. Should any Commissioner express interest in standing, the Board will hold a discussion on the matter without PH present.

- ii. **Commissioner Site Visits** - The Board agreed that it would be good practice, as duty holders, for Commissioners to formally record and register their site visits. GH requested that the Commissioners inform CHC Administration Officer of the date, location, and

details of their visits. A register will be established to track this activity, and Commissioners may also report back to the Board following their visits.

- iii. **Proposal for a Cadetship** - JK presented a proposal for a cadetship in collaboration with Trinity House, targeting individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds in the local area. Potential candidates could be identified through the SeaChange programme.

The Commissioners unanimously approved the proposal to proceed with the Trinity House Cadetship.

- iv. **Proposal for Flare Disposal Facility** - JK outlined a proposal to establish a safe, legal facility for the disposal of expired flares, addressing a gap left by HM Coastguard ceasing this service in 2022. The project has minimal setup costs and will operate as a non-profit stakeholder benefit. The Commissioners unanimously approved the proposal to pursue the Flare Disposal Facility.

There being no other matters for discussion, the meeting closed at 12.29.

**Date of next meeting:** Friday 13 December 2024 at 1000, Harbour Office, Cowes, Isle of Wight



13/12/2024