

NORTH DEVON COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Harbour Board held at Virtual - Online meeting on Tuesday, 2nd February, 2021 at 2.00 pm

PRESENT: Members:

Councillor Fowler (Chair)

Councillors Campbell and Wilkinson

Co-optees:

Martin Cleary, Bert Gear and Tim Gibbs

Officers:

Ilfracombe Harbour Master and Head of Resources/Designated Person

Also Present:

Clerk of Lynton and Lynmouth Town Council, a representative of Ilfracombe Town Council and Chair of the Ilfracombe Harbour Community Forum

82. VIRTUAL MEETINGS PROCEDURE - BRIEFING AND ETIQUETTE

The Corporate and Community Services Officer outlined the virtual meeting etiquette and procedure. The Chair introduced the Clerk of Lynton and Lynmouth Town Council and confirmed members present.

83. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence declared.

84. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 11TH AUGUST 2020 AND 17TH NOVEMBER 2020

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 11th August 2020 and 17th November 2020 (circulated previously), be approved as correct records and signed by the Chair.

85. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were made:

Councillor Fowler

All items – personal interest as was a member of Ilfracombe Yacht Club and a boat owner

Councillor Campbell

All items – personal interest as worked on Lundy Island and occasionally for the Landmark Trust

86. DESIGNATED PERSON PORT MARINE SAFETY CODE REPORT - ILFRACOMBE AND LYNMOUTH HARBOURS

The Board noted the Designated Person Port Marine Safety Code Audit Report – Ilfracombe and Lynmouth Harbours (circulated previously).

The Designated Person confirmed that the Marine Safety Management System was working effectively, ensuring compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code.

The Designated Person gave the Board the following summary of updates:

- The audit of both harbours was carried out on 5th January 2021, virtually due to Covid-19 lockdown. Present at the virtual meeting were: the Senior Engineer of North Devon Council, the Harbour Master, the clerk of Lynton and Lynmouth Town Council, the Designated Person and the Health and Safety Advisor

Ilfracombe - actions completed

- Version three of the Marine Safety Management System now referenced procedures for how to deal with suspected alcohol and drugs misuse
- The boats out had proceeded safely as planned
- The Environment Agency had completed repointing work on the Harbour wall by the Royal Britannia Public House
- New tie rails had been fitted to the East end of the first Landing and the second Landing
- New top gates had all been fitted

Ilfracombe – risk management

- An internal audit of the following topics was carried out this quarter:
 - (i) Piloting, Towage and Bunkering – found a minor non-conformity: Bunkering Standard Operating Procedure required formal acceptance by the Harbour Board and then to be displayed on the North Devon Council website
 - (ii) Licensing (Works, Tugs, Craft), Permitting (Diving and Hot Works) found a minor non-conformity: Standard Operating Procedure for Diving not available on the North Devon Council website
 - (iii) Auditing: Internal and External, Plans and Reporting non-conformity found whereby no performance assessment of the Marine Safety Management System or Benchmarking was carried out

- The Fender works at First Landing had been completed and extended on the inner-side of the kiosks allowing extra landing space
- The removal of top and bottom chains along Quay Wall was also now complete
- Tie off rails were to be fitted at Stone Bench which would provide another two spaces
- All chains had been fitted along Quay Road and all boat users now had their own designated chains. Two and a half tonnes of chains had been removed from the harbour as scrap
- Self-closing gates to close off Stone Bench and Second Landing were due to be in place by the end of February 2021

Lynmouth – actions completed

- The Marine Safety Management System document had now been amended for the non-conformities as picked up by APBmer during the external audit

Lynmouth – risk management

- An internal audit of the following topics was carried out:
 - (i) Piloting, Towage and Bunkering
 - (ii) Licensing (Works, Tugs and Craft), Permitting (Diving and Hot Works)
 - (iii) Dangerous Vessels and Dangerous Substances – non-conformity: no information available to visiting boats with regards to vessel traffic movement
- The legal status of the Harbour was still ongoing and as such most of the internal audit matters did not apply
- A galvanised hand rail was still to be fitted at the steps opposite the Rising Sun Pub, adverse weather conditions had delayed this work
- Works on the steps down to the slipway were also pending due to weather conditions. It had been noted their condition had not worsened since the last visit
- The ongoing ownership of the railings on the bridge had been assumed as that of Devon County Council's as they had instructed contractors to begin maintenance works on all three bridges in Lynmouth

87. HARBOUR STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE -BUNKERING

The Board considered the Ilfracombe Harbour Standard Operating Procedure – Bunkering report (circulated previously), by the Harbour Master.

The Harbour Master advised that this policy sets out what to do when handling fuel.

In response to how users fuelled up at Lynmouth Harbour and whether this policy could be adapted for Lynmouth. The Town Clerk replied that no fuel provision was provided at the Harbour with the nearest refuelling option being at Barbrook.

RESOLVED that the Ilfracombe Harbour Standard Operating Procedures – Bunkering be adopted.

88. LYNMOUTH HARBOUR MARINE SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM REPORT

The Board considered the Lynmouth Harbour Marine Safety Management System report (circulated previously), by the Clerk of Lynton and Lynmouth Town Council.

The Clerk of Lynton and Lynmouth Town Council updated the Board with the following:

- Lynmouth Harbour had always been considered to be a Haven but they were made aware that they were a non-statutory harbour and were a marine asset of North Devon Council
- There was a need for them to be represented on the Harbour Board
- A lot of work had been carried out to rectify the non-compliance points found during the external audit by APBmer
- Key Performance Indicators to report on were needed but had to be kept simple due to the lack of staff
- The need for a licence and procedure policy for dredging depended on the outcome of the legal status review that was currently ongoing
- Most of the non-compliance issues were administration related
- Once all procedures had been drawn up they would be displayed on the North Devon website

RESOLVED that:

- (a) The findings of the audit report be noted,
- (b) The Board actively works towards rectifying the 11 non-compliance issues, and;
- (c) At least one statutory position for a representative of Lynmouth Harbour management be included in strategic management of the facility be found.

89. HARBOUR STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES - DIVING

The Board considered the Ilfracombe Harbour Standard Operating Procedures – Diving report (circulated previously), by the Harbour Master.

The Board heard the following from the Harbour Master:

- The procedures would be placed on the North Devon website
- This procedure covered commercial and individuals diving and would give a full record of permits issued and dates entered the water

RESOLVED that the Ilfracombe Harbour Standard Operating Procedures – Diving be adopted.

90. MARINE SAFETY PLAN

The Board considered the Marine Safety Plan report, (circulated previously) by the Harbour Master.

The Harbour Master provided the Board with the following update:

- It was a requirement under the Port Marine Safety Code for a Harbour to produce and publish a Marine Safety Plan which set out an overview of safety management and objectives of the Harbour for a three year period
- This plan had previously been included as part of the Ilfracombe Business Plan which was updated annually. Industry best practice dictated that the Marine Safety Plan was a stand-alone document

RESOLVED that the Marine Safety Plan be adopted.

91. AIDS TO NAVIGATION UPDATE

The Harbour Master gave the Board members an update in relation to Aids to Navigation as follows:

- There had been short outages of the light at Stone Bench due to damage sustained to the Transformer box. A hole had been punctured in the box causing the outage from fishermen casting off their fishing lines. The box had now been replaced, and types of suitable meshing were being looked at to give a protective barrier whilst still allowing access
- Trinity House had booked their inspection of both Ilfracombe and Lynmouth Harbours later on in February 2021

92. HARBOUR SECURITY UPDATE

The Harbour Master updated the Board members in relation to the Harbour Security.

The following updates were given:

- The second security committee meeting had been held in December 2020
- An internal audit inspection had been held with Health and Safety Manager acting in her capacity as a certified Auditor with the findings reported to the Marine Resilience Security Division of the Department for Transport
- The Harbour Master and her Deputy had both attended virtually the Plymouth annual table top exercise in relation to the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS). Although Ilfracombe was only classed as an ISPS harbour when Cruise ships were operating.

93. INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE

The Board members received an update on Infrastructure from the Harbour Master.

The Board received the following updates:

- The application to the Maritime Fisheries Fund for the CCTV upgrade project had been successful. The Harbour had been awarded 75% towards the cost of the project.
- Adhoc security were the approved company who would carry out the installation of the new system which had night vision capability and would have a tannoy announcement system included as part of the works. The whole system would be linked into the Barnstaple main hub where monitoring would be 24 hours a day.

94. FUTURE PROJECTS

The Chair introduced a representative from Ilfracombe Town Council to the Board members and asked him to provide an update on solutions being considered to help address the Quay Road congestion issue.

The representative from Ilfracombe Town Council gave the Board members the following update:

- Due to social distancing requirements whereby more space was needed for pedestrians passing each other on the pavement. Access difficulties were identified as caused by the placing of advertising 'A' boards on the pavements by businesses. Following several near misses between pedestrians and vehicles along Quay Road and complaints received from visitors to the area it was the aspiration of the Town Council to rectify the problems. Higher volumes of visitors in cars caused congestion along the road and it was expected visitor numbers would be just as high this coming summer 2021
- Several solutions had been considered but rejected such as a traffic light system which would cause backlogs along St. James road
- Traffic calming measures were to be trialled, this would mean the shortening of or complete removal of the loading bay areas along Quay Road, widening certain areas for passing and the use of placing large planters to make the space a shared space, for pedestrians and vehicles. The creation of the shared spaces would give pedestrians safe points to step off the pavement to allow distancing for passers-by without stepping into the pathway of oncoming vehicles
- There would be clear signage for cars making them more mindful of pedestrians and the blockades would reduce cars ability to speed down Quay Road
- The blockades would be temporary to monitor how well the solution worked, if it was not working it could easily be removed elsewhere
- If Traders were happy and the scheme worked it was hoped funding could be sought for more permanent structures for a longer term solution

In relation to a question about whether advertising space could be sold on the sides of the planters. The representative of Ilfracombe Town Council advised that he thought this could be a possibility. The obstruction of 'A' boards could then be mitigated.

Councillor Wilkinson added that this method of barriers to create a shared space worked well in Woolacombe and aided social distancing.

The Chair thanked the representative from Ilfracombe Town Council for his update.

The Harbour Master provided the Board members with the following updates in relation to Future Projects:

- The Harbour Master had been approached by a ferry operator using electric/diesel/hydrogen hybrid ferries to bring business to Ilfracombe as a Smart Port. The Marine Business Technology Centre (MBTC) were in the process of applying for funds for constructing a marine digital platform suite using a 5G network. The proposal was to digitally twin Ilfracombe Harbour with the Town to create a small smart port platform as part of the pioneering project first set up in Plymouth Sound. An expression of interest was needed from Ilfracombe Harbour and the Harbour Master hoped that the Board members would support her in registering their interest. There was no cost involved as it was part of a test project

All the Board members expressed their support of an expression of interest being made.

The Head of Resources updated the Board in relation to the Water Sports Centre development. Tenders for the works were due in at the end of this week, as there had been a lot of clarification questions from Contractors it was hoped there were some tender submissions to come forward.

The Harbour Master continued with her update of future projects to the Board members as follows:

- A meeting had taken place with the Harbour Master, the MP for Devon, Senior Economic Development Officer at North Devon Council and the Chair of the North Devon Fishing Associations to discuss the new funding being launched that would replace the Maritime Fisheries Fund. The new Fishing Infrastructure Fund was a £100 million funding opportunity of which, it was hoped, Ilfracombe could apply for £300,000 towards the Cove area plans
- The Pier gate project was progressing with its tender specification, the relocation of the Pleasure grounds and Pier archway. Once completed external funding could be sought. All stakeholders had been kept up to date of progress and were aware that this would not be completed before March 2021

Chair

The meeting ended at 3.27 pm

NOTE: These minutes will be confirmed as a correct record at the next meeting of the Board.

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